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# THE RUSSIANS

AN INTERPRETATION

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RICHARDSON WRIGHT









# **THE RUSSIANS: AN INTERPRETATION**



# THE RUSSIANS

## AN INTERPRETATION

BY

**RICHARDSON WRIGHT** *anti-semitic*

*Author of "Through Siberia, an Empire in the Making,"  
"The Open Door," etc.*

You cannot understand Russia by the Intelligence;  
You cannot measure her by the ordinary foot-rule;  
She has her own peculiar formation;  
You can only believe in Russia.

—TIUTCHEV



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**TO**  
**ALBERT JONES FOSTER**

**392279**



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## PREFACE

It is possible to become quite mad on the subject of Russia. In fact, those who are attracted to her eventually become either obsessed with enthusiasm for all things Russ or embittered with suspicion and hatred. They would seem to prove that there was no middle course. One cannot take Russia casually; she is too big, too fundamental, too promising. She demands attention. Her ways are different from the ways of most nations. Her viewpoint is of a nature that breeds immediate controversy.

In attempting to steer a middle course through these pages I may have failed time and again; yet a *via media* was my plan. Any interpretation must be made clear both to those who are blind to the virtues of the subject in hand and those who are blind to its faults. Hatred and suspicion of Russia has led some to a complete denial of her strength or good intentions; enthusiastic obsession has led apologists to a complete denial of her weaknesses. To both classes come occasional awakenings that disrupt preconceived theories. Frankly, I have experienced this disenchantment many times. Withal, in traveling over the Russian Empire and through seven years of constant study in Russian affairs, I have had more pleasant awakenings than unpleasant. I have learned to be very slow in formulating judgments from newspaper reports or drawing quick decisions from a transient situation.

The deeper I have gone into Russian matters the more have I been influenced by the spiritual fact rather than by the statistic. Statistics change; the genus is permanent. The pageant of a people moves along very slowly. Ideals are not born overnight. The grand scheme of development is rarely obvious on the surface. The destiny is rarely in sight. What Russia has been makes her what she is to-day. The mark of the potter's thumb is upon her—but you must look very closely to see it.

Americans are people of statistics. We lay great store by size and number. We comprehend the romance of figures as do few nations. Moreover, we are very much concerned with making a living. Russia, on the other hand, is just arriving at a comprehension of figures, and she is very much more concerned with making a life

It is in the sort of life Russia is attempting to make that American interest is greatest. To phrase it colloquially, we are curious to find out what they are trying to do over there. But before that question is answered, we must understand what the people are like, what they believe in, how they go about their work, what their ideals are and how closely they are coming to them. The statistic may show how the wind blows; the ideals of a people constitute the power behind the wind.

In the following pages I have attempted to interpret the why and how of Russian life so that Americans can understand what the Russians are trying to do, what their present activities presage for the future, and how we as a people can establish with the Russians an *entente cordiale* that will have basis in something

firmer than the fluctuations of commerce or passing enthusiasm over the *Ballet Russe*.

There is no reason under the sun why the people of the greatest republic should not be on friendly terms with the people of the greatest autocracy. Between no two nations are there so many points of contact—what the states possess fitting so snugly into what Russia requires.

The United States will sorely need the friendship of alien folk when the war is done. Moreover, in self-defense it behooves us to cultivate the Russian people. A Russo-Japanese alliance looms all too menacingly on the distant horizon. There is no reason for our being too proud to be friendly.

To the fostering of this friendly spirit based on mutual understanding and sympathy, these pages are devoted.

Just as I finished these pages the uprising of the Douma leaders, expected by those intimately informed on Russian affairs, came about. It was, as I had believed it would be, practically a bloodless revolution. The blow was struck, the end attained, and immediately those in power devoted their energies to restoring order and furthering the campaigns of the armies in the field.

The blow was struck at the pro-German and German influences at Petrograd, influences which had thwarted every movement made by the army from the beginning of the war. It terminated German power in Russia. It opened to the great Slav Empire the opportunity to develop its own future after its own fashion. It meant that the forces which had worked to suppress and inhibit the people were stopped.



It forever silenced the rumors of Russia making a separate peace with Germany.

Russia undertook the *podvig* of revolution; she must now add to that burden by sternly facing the realities of reconstruction and further war. Let us hope that the hands which guide her destinies will be strengthened by the patience and sacrifice of the people that they be counseled with wisdom and their acts tempered with justice for all.

What Russia has been makes her what she is to-day. We cannot understand the Russia to come until we understand what she has been. Read in that light, the pages of this book should have a far-reaching influence on those who would understand Russia and the Russian people.

I am indebted for the rights of reproduction of certain material to the editors of *Travel*, *The Catholic World*, *The Bellman*, *The Ecclesiastical Review* and several other magazines. I also wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation of the kindly counsel and criticism proffered by Bassett Digby, Esq., of Petrograd and a host of other friends, Russian and American, both here and abroad, who have been so good as to lend a hand with this book. R. W.

New York City,  
March 20, 1917.

## **THE RUSSIANS: AN INTERPRETATION**



# THE RUSSIANS: AN INTERPRETATION

## CHAPTER I

### THE STRENGTH OF THE ADOLESCENT

**R**USSIA is a region of extreme cold, where people are jailed for speaking their own minds. "It is governed by a bureaucracy that grinds down the people.

"Its population is largely composed of anarchists and Jews."

Take any average American—the proverbial man-in-the-street type—propose the subject of Russia, and you will be edified by hearing something very like these observations on that country.

And, very likely, there will be a half-apologetic conclusion,—“Well, we Americans don’t know much about Russia, anyhow.”

The last statement is unquestionably sincere. Americans, as a rule, do know little about Russia, despite the fact that the Russian flag flies over one-sixth of

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the earth's land surface, that 182,000,000 souls, representing sixty-four racial and tribal divisions, speaking 150-odd tongues, hold allegiance to the Tsar; despite the fact that the individual, as an individual, is freer there than in any nation under the sun—circumstances which in any other instance would have long since bred intimacy between America and Russia.

Our prejudices are accountable. Russia has been geographically isolated. Having an agricultural population and lacking an open port the whole year through, its people have only recently crossed the ocean to our shores. It is logical that an agricultural people should be less widely known than seafaring nations.

Even when discerned, Russia's national characteristics are not readily understood. Of the various national souls in Europe, none is more difficult to analyze than the Russian, none more elusive, none so persistently defiant to superficial examination and sketchy generalizations.

Moreover, since the late '80's the world would seem to have been subjected to a campaign waged against the publication of the truth about Russia. We have heard little about that country save its evils. Time and again has she been deliberately misrepresented, misinterpreted and maligned. Her weaknesses have proved fat carrion for ghoulish pens to batten on. Some, unfortunately, have believed all the evil told of her. Some question. For most of us she remains an empire of enigmas.

With all this weight of prejudice and confusion it is surprising how our admiration is quickened when the real facts of Russia are presented to us. When we witness the artistic fact of the Russian ballet, no words

can express our enthusiasm. When we listen to the musical fact of Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky and Arensky, we are speechless with wonder. When we read the literary fact of Gogol, Gorky, Dostoevsky, Turgenev and Tolstoy, we are held a-marveling.

But the national contradictions are puzzling. One day we read of unbelievable fortunes rolling into the coffers of the State through a liquor monopoly; the next that it has been given up and the manufacture and sale of vodka prohibited throughout the Empire—a nation gone dry by the stroke of a pen! One day we read of exiles being scattered to the four corners of the globe; the next, of those exiles coming home to die for the very government against which they conspired. These paradoxes are only a handful of the multitudinous phases of the real Russ. Surely then, until we know the truth about the Russian people, it were folly to judge them or hope to understand their artistic creations and their future place in the great pageant of the nations.

The average American mentioned above is right—so far as he goes. Russia is an extremely cold region, especially the arctic sections, just as Canada is an extremely cold place in winter.

True, intellectual people by the thousands have been jailed for speaking their own minds, when they spoke them to what the authorities considered the detriment of the people at large. To put it in terms which will be developed later on, until the upheaval of March 1917 revolution has never been the sincere expression of the entirety of the Russian peoples.

True, much of the Government is in the hands of bureaucrats, just as is the government of England and

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of the United States. Any governing power that is not actually vested in the people—despite what a constitution may say—is a government of bureaucrats, whether they represent the Crown or Big Business.

But the great misconception of Russia comes about through judging her by the length of her years and not by her capacities. So much of Russia's life has been mingled with the East, so much of it spent as a buffer against the East, that if we judge her according to Western standards, she is just now coming of age. Russia is the adolescent of the world.

##### I

As soon as one crosses the frontier into Russia he feels the need for making clear distinctions. That the country is not as he conceived it, is the first fact to impress him. What he has heard about Russia and what it actually is may be as wide apart as the poles. For one who is studying Russia from a distance, the necessity for making these distinctions is even more important.

The first and perhaps most fundamental distinctions that have to be made are between Russia and the Russian Government; between the class that governs and the classes that are governed; between the faith that is taught and the faith that is believed, corresponding to the three great components of any nation that has an autocratic form of government and a state religion.

Unfortunately, many of us, when we think of Russia, think of it in the light of the reputation its government bears. Because the people have suffered lamentably in political darkness, we have a feeling that the

land must also be shrouded in darkness. Quite the reverse is the case. No nation, save the United States, is so economically self-sustaining or possesses such a wealth of diversified scenery and manifold natural resources. From arctic Archangel to the sunny Crimea, from Teutonic Poland to the orientalized Pacific maritime provinces—a gigantic expanse of over eight and a half million square miles—endless beauty and the evidences of incalculable natural wealth greet the eye.

You may go among men who have been exiled and have fled to foreign countries, you may talk to the humble folk who have come to seek wealth in our cities, and with one accord they will tell you that, though they hold bitter grievance against the Russian Government, they still love the Russland and hope some day to return. Nor have I ever found the traveler who has visited Russia and not promised himself to go back. There is a haunting quality about its scenery, there is an enlivening stimulus to be caught from the singular life of the people, from the admixture of nationalities and tongues, from the varied customs and faiths that the frontiers of the empire hold.

Certainly confusion arises in considering the relation between the Russian and his Government. In matters of politics the Russian citizen is governed and his voice and vote count for little. In matters of morals and even in matters of faith he is practically left to govern himself. He may be intoxicated five nights out of the week, or what the Russians call a "bitter" drunkard, and no one will say aught save that he is a fool and to be pitied. But let him talk recalcitrant politics for one night in the week, and the *gendarmérie* will soon attend to his case.



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So then, such problems as the Finn and the Pole—the hyphenates of Russia—are not his problems, nor is he concerned with the Jew, save as the Jew touches his life to make it difficult.

### II

Between social strata the differences are clearly defined. The population can be cross-sectioned much as can a layer cake—and the layers are many. Whereas previous to the middle of the 20th Century there were but two classes—the nobles who owned the land and the *moujiks* who farmed it—there have been evolved other social classes in the recent course of the economic and political development of the country. For a matter of fact, Russian law recognizes the following classes:—nobility, clergy, privileged burgesses, merchants, burgesses, partisans and peasants.

At the head of the social ladder below the royal family stands the nobility. This body is composed of two classes, hereditary nobles and life or personal nobles. The privilege of personal nobility, which amounts to little more than a title, accompanies certain ranks in the administrative service, which is graded, after the oriental manner, into *tchins*. Hereditary nobility is also automatically attained on becoming a Councilor of State in the Civil Service, a colonel in the army and a senior captain in the navy; it can also be conferred by the Emperor. Certain government offices are reserved for the nobility and they enjoy a preponderance of seats in the *Zemstvos* in addition to other privileges; the *Maréchal de Noblesse* in each administrative district being president of the local *Zemstvo*, or provincial council, and a majority of seats being allotted them

in the Imperial Council (the upper legislative house) and the Imperial Douma (the lower house).

Since the nobility numbers some 600,000, it forms an appreciable nucleus, albeit many of them are common stock, merely possessors of inherited titles that, in many instances, mean little or nothing to-day. Thus the noble colonel may dicker with his equally noble greengrocer for the common necessities of the day. There is a fine democracy about it all. Noblemen will be found doing menial tasks—men and women with scarcely enough to keep body and soul together, many of them, who for all their poverty cherish their honors and accept with fine *éclat* the petty respect shown them by their fellows.

A decisive majority of the aristocracy, however, is influential. Moreover an amazing part of it is Teuton. And thereby hangs the tale of the unity of the Russian masses in this war, for the class that has been influential in the past 300 years has gradually been becoming either Teuton or Teutonized, and from the Teuton did Russia learn many lessons of government that, misapplied, have brought about regrettable wrongs. Much of the corruption in the Russian Government to-day—commonly known as “the dark forces”—bears the stamp, “Made in Germany.”

The clergy as a class do not dominate to-day in the manner of previous generations, and comment on them, apart from mention in this survey as a class that represents one arm of the Government, will be reserved for a later chapter.<sup>1</sup>

Although not legally recognized as a class, the higher *intelligentia* form a sufficiently strong body to

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter V.

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place directly beneath the nobility. They are not always people of material wealth, yet they are usually possessed of a wealth of learning and appreciation. Often they are traveled folk, well read, cultured, firm believers in the Orthodox Faith, and generally staunch supporters of the existing order. Among them, of course, are vigorous recalcitrants, but the majority of the higher *intelligentia* may be said to view the present sociological and governmental situations in a calm and philosophic frame of mind, strong in the belief that when the time is ripe they will be remedied. Without question, they are the most stable type of Russian people, patriotic, faithful, believing, living in the light of modern thought—not in the darkness as does the peasant—and still sincere upholders of Russian ideals.

In this class fall many of the urban proletariat, families that have become well-to-do and influential with the growth of the cities and the increase of industries.

Below the *intelligentia* comes the small bourgeoisie, with all the weaknesses of a smug, half-learned middle class.

The rest of the populace—140,000,000, or 80% in all—is *moujik*, peasant.

The cultured Russian is practically the same as any cultured person the world over.<sup>1</sup> The fact that the Dean of the University of Moscow drinks his tea from a tumbler, and the president of Harvard drinks his

<sup>1</sup> Unquestionably there are superficial differences. There was the young married couple, straight from Petrograd on a honeymoon, who came to call the other evening. Both were of the higher *intelligentia*. They had been entertained at one of the fashionable New York women's clubs. She was visibly shocked. "You call American women cultured!" she exclaimed. "I saw them there, sitting with their legs crossed like men, reading newspapers, a cigarette between their lips and a high-ball at their elbows." This from a girl whose women-folk are supposed to be the most inveterate smokers in the world!

from a cup, makes little or no difference in their conceptions of justice, psychology, art or any of those great subjects in which cultured people are vitally interested. But the peasantry of Russia stands no such comparison with a like class in other lands.

Compared with the peasant of lands under the Western influence, the *moujik* makes a very poor showing. His level of literacy is low, his capacity for drink enormous, and his innate laziness amazing.<sup>1</sup> Compared with the peasant of those nations in which the Oriental influence predominates, the *moujik* is a superior being. Thus he may live in a hovel, but it will be a fairly clean hovel. His clothes may be dirty, but his body will be washed. The weekly bath is almost part of the peasant's religion. He loves disorder just as the West loves order and efficiency. It is an injustice to judge him by terms foreign to him. Take him as he is, and few people afford a more illuminating study. For in that great horde of 140,000,000 you find the real Russ, unspoiled as yet by Western customs and Western philosophy. His problems are the problems of Russia. His genius is the soul of Russia. His is the class best to know, to understand and to love, for in him lies the strength of adolescent Russia.

<sup>1</sup> While the war has changed for the better many of these conditions—mainly the drunkenness—class habits are not to be overcome in so short a time as a few years. During 1913 drunkenness increased 12½% and the evil effects were felt throughout the empire. Since the prohibition of the sale of liquors, marks of prosperity and betterment have been evident in a dozen different ways—in the increase of savings deposits, in the decrease of railroad accidents and insanity in the army and in crime. The Russian people find temperance a great blessing on the whole. If the war has done nothing else, it has brought Russia this incalculable boon.

## III

There are two genuinely great Russian cities, Moscow and Kiev. Petrograd is only a French city with a Russian veneer and—until the opening of the war—a German populace. But Moscow and Kiev are pure Russ.

Enter the church of St. Vladimir at Kiev, and you touch the birthplace<sup>1</sup> of Russia's Christianity—the spot where Vladimir and his hosts stepped down into the waters of the Dnieper for baptism. Stand within the turreted Kremlin walls, and you feel the heart of Russia beat, you behold the glory of her dream and see the bulwarks of her strength. For the strength and the vision and the pulse of the Russ is his religion. Grasp that, and you have his secret, you touch his intangible genus.

By no means is the *moujik* body entirely Orthodox. The *moujik* is as fecund of sects as a Chicago University professor. There are, beside the *Raskolniks*—the Old Believers—the Mullakons, the Doukoboors and a host of others. In dogma they differ little from Orthodoxy, the main lines of divergence being in practice. One, two or three generations of dissent are scarcely enough to eradicate eight centuries of dogma. Moreover, while there may be slight differences in dogma, there is also the distinction between the faith that the *moujik* is taught to believe and the faith he actually does believe. However confusing this problem of peasant religion, the fact that he *is* a religious person is the vital factor both to the peasant and to those who would attempt to understand him.

<sup>1</sup> An ancient Russian hymn runs, "Kiev, Holy Kiev, is the mother of towns."

Untangle the matted roots, and three main strands of the *moujik's* religion will be seen: the dogma taught him by the Church, the paganism that a life close to the soil has bred, and the inherent Orientalism which has been brought to the surface under economic and political pressure.

Be he Orthodox or dissenter, the *moujik's* religion is centered not on the present, but on the farther side of the grave. Its symbol is the Resurrection. From this present period of suffering Death is the gateway to Life. The silver knows the fire that the dross may be purged from it. You are made perfect in suffering, says the Russ.

Suffering may be visited upon you or it may be undertaken voluntarily as a *podvig*,<sup>1</sup> a great act of self-abnegation. However it comes, it is to be accepted with resignation. Some of it was visited upon the *moujik*; he was a serf for 400 years, and in many present instances debt and agrarian evils have not permitted him to rise much above the level of serfdom. Some of it the *moujik* invites and jolly well deserves for his laziness, drunkenness and stupidity. Some of it he undertakes of his own accord, hoping for perfection thereby.

Voluntary and involuntary, this class suffering has developed, through the generations, the *moujik's* capacity for pity. As with an individual, so with a race; suffering evolves a consciousness, an understanding of

<sup>1</sup> An amusing story of the *podvig*, "The Devil Chase," was written by Nicholas Leskov. It is the tale of a rich merchant who has never had any real reason for repentance, and "stages" a Bacchanalian riot in a Moscow restaurant which costs him a small fortune, after which, satisfied that he has a thoroughly sound basis for repentance, he retires into a monastery!

intangible things not comprehended by those who seek conviction by eye and ear alone.

Pity bred of suffering has still another child—the capacity for forgiveness. Because he can understand, the *moujik* can forgive even the worst wrongs against him. Because he understands the beggar, he holds the beggar sacred—he rouses him to pity and charity. Because he, too, has sinned, he can condone excesses and lapses from virtue. Because he has known the chains of serfdom and suppression, he pities the prisoner, even the murderer, calling him “poor fellow.” There is nothing Pharisaical about his attitude. With true humility he confesses to “these bonds.”

Such elements in the *moujik's* religion have fondly been termed “mystical” by some writers. I believe that here is a more tangible explanation. His attitude is eminently practical, considering the fact that he believes the good God looks after his soul in the end. His acceptance of wrongs was brought about by the bayonet and the knout under the direction of the Government and the landowners in the dark days of serfdom. There was nothing for him to do but accept. An Oriental strain in his blood quickened his capacity for resignation. It also gave him the view of Death as the gateway to Life. Besides who would not welcome death after such a life? . . . As for pity and the capacity for forgiveness, these are not virtues restricted to Christians; they are logical mental states found the world over. Pity, as William Blake aptly observed, has a human face.

From this it must not be inferred that the *moujik* is a funereal fellow. Far from it.<sup>14</sup> His capacity for laughter rivals his capacity for vodka. He loves mer-

riment as he loves the sun and the wholesome black earth. And in this love of sun and earth lies another phase of his religion: its indisputable paganism.

The same *moujik* who lights a candle in his *ikon* corner at home each morning will sacrifice to the house fairies, the *domovies*, who guard the hearth. The fisherman who nails the *ikon* at his masthead will pour a sacrifice to the water nymphs. In fact, the blessing of the water, a yearly ceremony throughout Russia, is nothing more than a relic of paganism sanctioned by the Church. At a tiny Cossack village on the Amur in hinter Siberia I watched this ceremony. It was a cold, gray, grim dawn. The entire village, headed by priest, cross and banners, trooped down to the river bank. There with prayers and incense the waters were duly blessed. And then the natives, one by one, bent down, worshiped and drank of the muddy stream. Some carried jugs of it home to scatter on the fields that they might be plentiful. It was beautiful—and it was pagan.

This *moujik*, then, wears his Christianity like a coat. He is an instinctive pantheist.

At heart he is also an instinctive socialist and an instinctive revolutionist. These two are due to class segregation through the 400 years of serfdom and since—segregation that has made him independent as a class and communistic in self-defense. The *Mir*, a communistic system of self-government, is a striking example of these tendencies which at once strengthen and weaken the *moujik*.

As a result, he is intensely gregarious and clannish. I have noted this especially in Siberia, whither a quarter of million settlers go each year, a region eminently



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suited for seeing the peasant "on his own." He lives in towns and hamlets. You do not find the solitary hut far out in the wilderness as you find settlers in our West. He will go out and battle for bread against the elements, if he can battle along with his fellows—but alone, never.

Moreover, to this day he fails to understand the genuine realities of the classes above him because he has never mingled with them and because he has so often been exploited by the classes that came to mingle with him and his fellows. Sessions of the Douma, where all classes meet, bear abundant witness both to this gregarious habit of the *moujik* and to the governmental class distinctions mentioned above. In addition, the Government has seen to it that the *moujik* stays in his class.

Some fine results have developed from this class segregation; for example, the handicraft work of the peasants, the *Kustarny*, as they are known. Russia proper—not including Finland and Poland—has a total of not more than 2,500,000 factory hands, but its handicraft workers, living in villages, devoting their time to the manufacture of all manner of peasant wares, totals 8,000,000 to 10,000,000. Their products range all the way from bark sandals to jewelry, from cart wheels to *ikons*. With primitive tools and in primitive fashion, these ten millions produce an enormous yearly output of articles of great beauty and utility. Upon their devoted labors the Government has leaned heavily during the war. The workers are generally divided into bands or *artels*, sharing expenses and profits equally, a purely communistic arrangement

that has made great numbers of the peasants economically independent.

These generations of suppression and class segregation have also bred in the people the soul of patience, and if you would understand the *moujik* in revolt, you must first understand the wrath of the patient man. Proverbially, it is a thing to be feared. It accumulates through long impositions and wrongs. Then suddenly it bursts forth with hideous anger.

Much has been written on the woes of the peasants, but as I went among them I began to feel that they would resent the sort of sympathy we Americans are apt to shower on them. Our Semitic-owned press has kept us sufficiently informed on all the injustice borne by the peasant, although it has been singularly neglectful of the peasant's standpoint and position in it all. We have been given the doleful picture of a human personification of "What's the use?" being beaten, robbed and starved. Much of this picture is an exaggeration.

Ask the peasant what he wants socially, economically and educationally, and he will talk much in the manner of a child about to be turned loose in a candy shop. Leaders of movements have gone among the people trying to formulate for them their woes, but when the *moujik* has been given an opportunity for expressing his methods for alleviating those woes, his capacity has been about that of the child's before he starts to sample the candy. The story of the first and second Doumas verifies this comparison. Peasant leaders came to Petrograd with a program of reforms that, had it been adopted, no nation under the sun could have supported. The program was tabled, and the attitude of

the peasant was a shrug, "*Niechevo!*"—"What's the use!" He didn't care anything for the candy, after all. That, of course, is another expression of the patient man's wrath; the man who nurses his woes, strikes a quick blow, and is all over it in the next minute. The peasant may not be entirely over it, but he has lost interest. In the elections for the third Douma the *gendarmerie* had fairly to drive the people to the polls.

It is often asked, "Why have not popular revolts succeeded?" The answer is that rarely in Russian history has there been anything approaching a unity of desire in the masses. Moreover, at no time has there been raised up a leader—save he came from a class above—who has been strong enough for the task. Such a leader is appearing. His name is Commerce. When he grows big enough the *moujik* will know freedom.

However unfair it may seem and however much it may hurt, the hand of the bureaucracy is the only guide whereby the Government has kept the varied elements and peoples in line. That discipline has established and maintained a great national identity, and has brought into being the Russian power of assimilation which, as a nation, is the Russian people's greatest characteristic.

Russian history is quite comparable to the psychology of adolescence. For the Russians are not among the oldest peoples in Europe as we figure civilization, but among the youngest in development and characteristics. Their growth has been retarded because, for centuries, they stood as the watcher at the gate, repelling Asiatic hordes and suffering their cities to be pillaged and their fair land laid waste, while the

rest of Europe was passing through those stages which brought it to its high state before the present war.

Two things are clear in this adolescent *moujik's* mind, however. They are summed up in the native proverb: "Our souls are God's; our bodies, the Tsar's." For, despite all his experiences, the *moujik* bears the Tsar no ill-will. He may hate with destructive hatred the Tsar's agents, but the person and station of the Emperor is always to him that of the Lord's anointed.

#### IV

Of all the Tsar's regiments it is said that the staunchest, the bravest, the clearest-headed are those from Siberia. The characteristics of these Siberian troops, as brought out in the war, serve for an illuminating commentary on what the average *moujik* can make of himself when given a sane degree of liberty.

In Siberia life is much more free than in European Russia, because life is much more scattered. Save in the cities there is not a very rigid police surveillance. Men and women have a chance to hew out their destinies of brain and brawn: brawn, because the life challenges them to work; brain, because the opportunities for schooling are not so few and far between as one might be led to expect. The average rural school in Siberia suffers little by comparison with the rural schools in our thinly populated Western states. The city schools and private academies are well equipped and well attended. Tomsk University and the Technology Institute average an aggregate attendance of about two thousand—not a bad figure for an agricul-

tural population scattered over an area larger than the United States.

It is in Siberia that the *moujik* meets the ultimate test of his soul stuff. There he must fight not alone for the mere essentials of food and drink and clothes and shelter, but in the midst of a native Oriental and semi-barbaric life, must keep the faith and preserve the national identity. Few settlers indeed are swallowed up by the environment. The bulk of them remain Orthodox and Russian. In fact, so great has grown the immigrant population that the native tribes are being fast Russified.

v

Despite the valor of these progressive *moujik* troops—and a host of others—the Russian arms have suffered violence. The Russian soul has met defeat in this war. Yet it is in defeat that the Russian genius invariably finds victory.

For a matter of racial and spiritual fact, reforms come about after an interior awakening aroused by fear of exterior attack and influence, and an appreciation of racial strength. There is the soul of France. Up to the present many have looked upon it as a tinsel thing, something to make cafés bright and *vin ordinaire* popular. In the fire of defeat and discouraging delay has been evolved a different soul—a soul noble and strong and unfailing. Defeat has transfused some of the same elements into the Russian soul.

Four distinct times, by the reverse of her arms, has the great Slav Empire rid herself of lamentable evils “to march on in the slow pageant of the race.” The defeat of Peter the Great at Narva by Charles II of

Sweden brought about the reorganization of Russian society. The Napoleonic invasion gave Russia a place in European diplomacy. The Crimean defeat was followed by the emancipation of the serfs and the building up of the far-flung Asiatic provinces. The defeat in South Manchuria was followed by the revolution of 1905 and the endowment of the masses with the semblance of a representative government. The phoenix might well replace the double eagle as the symbol of Russia, for the power of the Russian people lies—as lies the faith of the *moujik*—in the Resurrection, in the ability to find Life after Death, and victory after defeat.

The greatest victory of the Russian people thus far has been their defeat at Teutonic hands. It has purged their soul, tried it as silver is tried. What form the victory will take eventually, no one can foretell with any degree of exactness: perhaps more freedom of speech; perhaps more authority in self-government; perhaps a stable development of the great natural resources by the Russian people themselves; perhaps a combination of all these things. Whatever the victory, it will be a victory for the people. It will mean that the mass of the people, the *moujiks*, will be becoming more and more prepared for a step upward. And in that day the Russ will be even more worth understanding.

## CHAPTER II

### WHAT IS A RUSSIAN ?

**M**Y neighbor in the rear spoke with an irreproachable Petrograd accent. He also drank vodka and trafficked in munitions. So, one day, I asked him if he weren't Russian.

"Russian? Am I Russian?" He seemed quite surprised. "Certainly I am Russian. My grandfather was a Swede and my grandmother was a Tartar. . . . And I am Russian."

This conversation happened in New York. I have had it happen a dozen times in Russia. For Napoleon was right—so far as he went. You do find the Tartar when you scratch the Russ. But Napoleon went no farther than Moscow. Penetrate to the outer fringes of the empire, and there is a great deal more to the Russ than the Tartar; in fact, the farther one goes into Russia, the more he becomes snarled in the tangled race roots.

Students have striven in vain to find the pure Russ. There is no such person to-day. The Russ is as his nation, and Russia is neither the most western of Eastern nations nor the most eastern of Western nations. She is a mingling of the two. She is a gigantic maelstrom.

The question of "What is a Russian?" can be answered only by tracing the various currents in this

maelstrom back to their sources. This necessitates "tunking" the dust off some volumes of history, but the process may prove illuminating and, at times, mildly diverting.

## I

Since historians have such varied and contradictory theories on the original sources of the Slavs—save that they came from Asia in the dim past of the first tribal migration westward—it were best to pick them up in the region where record first finds them—in the Carpathians, in the snow-choked mountain fastnesses where the troops of Nicholas and Franz Josef battled for supremacy.

A marauding band, these Slavs had their swarming nests there, and went off at intervals to take their toll of the countryside, penetrating at times the eastern limits of the Roman Empire. By the 6th Century they had managed to make a fairly fearsome name for themselves. But this was not to continue. In the course of time, internecine strife and attacks by other tribesmen—the Avars mostly—robbed them of their power. They were split into two groups: the Western Slavs, which comprised the progenitors of the Moravians, Czechs, Poles and Pomeranians; and the Eastern Slavs, which included the forefathers of the Croats, Serbs and Ruthenians. The former drifted north, but the latter migrated, under attack and under the lure of a more kindly climate, to the valley of the Dnieper River, where they fell into trading in the products of the forest—wax, honey and furs.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This is the most plausible of three theories concerning the origin of the progenitors of the Russian Slavs. Early Russian chroniclers hold quite the opposite view. The German historian, A. V. von



The land between the Dnieper and the Don was a thick forest. In this they made clearings and built up their *goroditscha* or fortified house-yards. Clusters of these *goroditscha* formed the nucleus of *gorods*, towns. This word *gorod* is still preserved in the names of many Russian towns and cities. Thus, Novgorod, the new city; Petrograd, the city of Peter; Tsargrad, as Constantinople was known in the old days and still is known to those who dream of supplanting the Crescent over St. Sophia by the Cross.

This Dnieper Valley, together with the valleys of the Lovat and the Volkshov and Lakes Ladoga and Illmen, formed a natural avenue of commerce between the Baltic and the Black Sea, between the Scandinavian Peninsula and Byzantium. By the time the Eastern Slavs began to make their way down into this great plain the path was already well defined by caravans passing southward to Byzantium. The newcomers naturally took up the trade and became powers in the land. Their proclivity for conquest was only in abeyance, however, for as they grew in power they reverted to their former marauding. Roving bands ravaged the country round about and penetrated eastward. These expeditions netted, among other booty, large bodies of captives which were taken in turn to Byzantium and sold as slaves. Here is the alleged source of our word slave; not that the Slavs were slaves but that they dealt in

Scholzer, and the Russians, Karamsin, Pogodin and Soloviev, contend that primitive tribes of Finns and Slavs lived in the Great Russian Plain prior to the 9th Century, and that Scandinavians coming from the north taught them their first conception of tribal government.

A third theory is that the Eastern Slavs dwelt in the Russian Plain long before the Christian Era, that they had primitive family unions from which were formed tribes that later developed tribal unions, eventually gravitating into the trading cities of Kiev and Novgorod.

them; in fact, by the end of the 11th Century the Slavs were the masters of the fur and slave trade.

The government of the people at this time was purely tribal. Each tribe—and their name was legion—had an overlord who bore the title of Tsar. The title has ever since clung to the supreme head of Russia. It was not held officially until the reign of Ivan III, and between his time and the time of Peter the Great (1721) Tsar was the recognized title. Peter the Great, expanding his empire, assumed the title of Emperor. The monarch now bears the triple title, Emperor of Russia, Tsar of Poland and Grand Duke of Finland. This original tribal government was patriarchal to all intents and purposes, and the relation between the masses and the family overlord was close. A remnant of this feeling is to be found among the masses to-day. They refer to the Emperor as the Tsar, and often as "Little Father." The latter title, however, does not necessarily imply any ardent affection, as, in this generation, it is an every-day diminutive.

The increase of the Byzantine traffic and the amalgamation of the *goroditscha* into towns and the growth of the towns into the great trading cities marked the first period of these Slavs and of Russian history. The history centers about Kiev, the chief of the trading cities in the south and about Novgorod, the chief city in the north—marking the Slav terminals of the caravan traffic—and about the smaller cities en route, Pskov, Smolensk and Polotsk. The people who came there, mingled and inter-married with the Eastern Slavs, or even attacked them, were the first currents to start swirling in the maelstrom of the Russian soul.

Two main currents introduced at this epoch were the Chozars and the Variagians. Their stories also serve as excellent examples of racial characteristics still discernible in the national genus.

About the same time that the Eastern Slavs began to spread over the Great Russian Plain, the steppes of the south were invaded by an Asiatic horde, of Turkish and Arabic origin, known as the Chozars. Although a nomadic race they built cities in this steppe region that grew so prosperous as to lure thither great numbers of Arabic and Jewish traders. The Jewish element predominated; in fact, its influence increased so rapidly that the Chozars found it to their advantage to adopt Judaism. In the course of the 8th Century this great Jewish body formed an empire that controlled much of the Baltic-Black Sea trade. The Slavic tribes living near the steppes were duly subjugated and compelled to pay tribute. But the Slavs turned their subjugation to good account, for, as conquered people, their trade was protected and they had to concern themselves only with the trafficking. From the Chozars they learned the art of commerce and its possibilities. With almost modern astuteness they developed their business on the capital of a competitor! By the middle of the 9th Century they had learned the art so well as to outstrip their subjugators and command control of the trading situation.

With the Chozars eliminated from the situation as rival traders, and the Byzantium traffic taking such proportions that almost every Slav was in some way concerned with it, there were not enough people available to guard the lonely hinterland stretches of the trade routes and to convoy the caravans. For this pur-

pose were then called in a number of non-Slavic tribes—Swedes, Norwegians, Goths and Angles—known collectively as the Variagians. Mercenaries these, men with a price. Given the task of policing the routes, they soon grew sufficiently powerful to demand their own terms. From wage earners they became leviers of tribute, usurpers of power. They drew recruits from the north, trebled their numbers, dictated their own terms and succeeded in establishing their own leaders as princes of the trading cities. It was almost an exact counterpart of what the Normans did in Italy in the 11th Century. The free trading cities, Kiev and Novgorod, became Variagian princedoms. Rurik, whom the Russians reckon their first ruler, was, in cold fact, nothing more than a mercenary leader raised to power by the influence of his mercenary fellows. Eventually these foreign leaders evolved the *Boyarstvo*, an aristocracy of landowners who played an important rôle in Russian history until the middle of the 13th Century.

Thus came two currents—Jewish, Arabic and Turkish in the beginning, Swedish, Norwegian, Gothic and Angle later—setting the maelstrom on the spin. The latter introduction of foreign blood also marked the beginning of a practice that has ever since been one of the deterrents to Russian progress as an individual nation.

Throughout her history Russia has constantly called in alien people to help in her work, to lend her a hand. Almost invariably has the hired assistant overcome his employer. Because of its proximity, Germany has been chief contributor of this assistance, and not until the war was well under way did the mass of the Russian

people recognize that what the Variagians had done in the 10th Century, Germany was attempting to do in the 20th; moreover, that she had well-nigh accomplished her purpose.

The later development of the Variagian invasion marked the beginning of still another Russian national characteristic discernible to-day—the power of assimilating foreign peoples. The Variagian elements eventually became wholly absorbed in the Slavic, just as previously had the Chozars been drawn into the national mid-stream.

The introduction of foreign elements by no means weaned the developing Russ nation away from the West. Between the Near East of those days and the other European powers was the binding cordiality of mutually advantageous commerce, exchange of art and literature and the kinship of blood. The Princes of Kiev were related to the rulers of France, Hungary, Norway and England. Kiev was rivaling the glory of Byzantium. Then came a cleavage. The wedge was forged in the fires of dogma. Russia suddenly accepted Christianity.

Previous to the end of the 10th Century the religion of the Eastern Slavs was a mixture of nature and ancestor worship, based on a well-defined mythology. In 988 Vladimir, Prince of Kiev, was converted to Christianity through his marriage with Anne, sister of the Emperor of Greece, and by royal decree the people under him were baptized and allied themselves with the Christian religion as interpreted by the Byzantine Church. Kiev, already commercial and intellectual center of Russ, became the spiritual metropolis.

This national acceptance of Christianity had a far-

reaching effect on both the people and the relations between the embryo Russian nation and the rest of Europe.

As is observed in the preceding chapter, the pagan strain is still a vital element in the peasant's faith, the peasant's life close to the soil being unquestionably responsible for it, although some of the legends and practices still extant are traceable to those in the mythology of the ancient Russ and of the native tribes that were assimilated. By this I do not mean to infer that the peasant's paganism is merely an inheritance from these early times; yet fidelity to primitive type is a characteristic strong with the Russian even to-day.

With Christianity came the Church, Vladimir making the spiritual government of Russ conform to the lines of that in Byzantium. "The State entrusted to her jurisdiction all matters and relations of life which sprang directly from the popular adoption of Christianity; while, on the other side, the clergy were guided in the regulations of those matters and relations by the Church's rules, reënforced by authority granted them by the temporal power for the taking of such disciplinary and administrative measures as might seem advisable for the adapting of those rules to the existing conditions of Russian Life."<sup>1</sup> Immediately there began to develop important distinctions and definitions that seriously affected the life of the people.

Whereas before the masses were guided by instinct and inclination, their life was now circumscribed by laws and regulations. Distinction was made between crime and sin, between the infringement of the law of man and the law of God. There came into being

<sup>1</sup> A History of Russia. By V. O. Kluchevsky. Vol. I. Page 172.

the Ordinance, the Church law, and the *Russkaia Pravada*, the law of the State. For each type of infringement special penalties were set—corporal punishment and fines being the usual modes. Neither of these codes recognized the validity of the death penalty; for that matter, save in the case of political crimes and “military necessity,” Russian law still makes no provision for the extreme penalty. Laws preserving the sanctity of women were very strict in the *Pravada* and the Church was equally strict in narrowing the circle of consanguinity. Another outcome of this ecclesiastical influence was that for the pagan union of the clan the Christian union of the family was substituted.

But even more far-reaching were the effects on the Russian nation. The bond between peoples at this time was the bond of faith. Automatically, as she took on Byzantine Christianity, did Kiev cut herself off from Roman Christianity and the interests the Church of the West controlled. The schism was more than a break in dogma, it was a break in standards. By her choice Kiev lost caste. She was no longer ranked on a par with the nations of the West, and to that rating is due much of the subconscious prejudice against Russia to-day.

## II

By the 12th Century slavery had assumed vast proportions. Kiev, the artistic, industrial, intellectual, administrative and ecclesiastical center of Russ, owed its richness of life to the labors of thousands of slaves. The wealth of the country thereabouts was dependent on slave labor. Through this system eventually grew

up the great disparity between classes, between the rich merchant and the slave laborer, between the wealthy landowner and the slave farmer. Among the ruling classes jealousy of power and wealth sowed seeds of dissension. In the economic and social structure of Kiev appeared those cracks which presage collapse. The dissension within was equaled only by the threat of attack from without. On the horizon loomed the shadow of the Mongol. Twice already had the Eastern Slavs stemmed Asiatic invasions—the Petchenges in the 9th and 11th Centuries and the Polovetzes in the 11th and 13th; twice already had attacking and conspiring people—the Chozars and the Variagians—been absorbed. But now there was no such defensive unity in the Slav people.

Dissatisfaction, coupled with the fact that the trade in forest products required an occasional change of scene, bred among the people the desire to migrate. The 12th Century had seen a steady stream of settlers going northward. By degrees Kiev was depopulated. Dissenting princes moved up the Oka and Volga valleys and founded rival kingdoms. The city of Vladimir sprang up, and Moscow later assumed the heritage of Kiev. The Russian people split into small groups and the land was divided into small provinces, each rivaling the other with a jealousy that was anything but Christian, in fact, at times heathenishly murderous. In short, there was no bond of ideals or purposes between the factions of the Russ people.

Then came the débacle. From the East swept the Mongol hordes. Once they were thrown back, but they returned again. Kiev fell and was reduced to shambles. The tide poured on. By 1240 Russia was completely



beneath the yoke of the Mongol. Mongol and Tartar chieftains laid their destructive hands upon the political, economic and social life of the people, and for 200 years Russia suffered the invader.

By her subjugation Russia placed the rest of Europe eternally in her debt, for she stemmed the westward tide of invasion. Europe was left to work out her economic and political destinies unmolested. Russia had to bide her time.

Russia has always bided her time. Her national capacity for patience is superhuman. But with this patient harmlessness of the dove there has always been the regenerating wisdom of the serpent. What the Eastern Slavs accomplished by their defeat and subjugation to the Chozars and Variagians in the 9th Century, the Russian accomplished with the Tartars in the 13th.

By ingratiating themselves with the Tartar Khans of Kazan, Astrakhan and the Crimea, as the Golden Horde was divided, the princes of Russia succeeded in getting a hand once more in the administration of affairs. Those who were fortunate enough to gain this favor were the princes of Moscow, and through the growth of their power Moscow became the state about which the Russian Empire was built. Once this power was gained, the Golden Horde read its doom. Ivan III delivered the death blow. Moscovy rose from the ashes. The Tartar was driven out, but great numbers stayed and were assimilated. Also during the two preceding centuries there had been infused into the Slav blood a perceptible Tartar strain.

And there we are, back once more to the Russian munition agent who said that his grandmother was a

Tartar and his grandfather was a Swede, and he was Russian.

### III

There are three main ethnological groups in Russia today—the Great, Little and White Russians. Each has a separate history, each has its body of legends and its own peculiar mode of living; one, at least, has its own political aspirations. These differences, to which the traveler to Russia must be accustomed, can be traced in large measure to the effects of climate and environment and the assimilation of native tribes.

The migration of the Kiev malcontents and traders northward and the Mongol raids left the Dnieper Valley depopulated, a state in which it remained until the middle of the 15th Century. It also left it open to invasion and annexation by peoples from the West. The latter was accomplished by a combination of Poles and Lithuanians.

When the Tartar tide began to recede, life in the Dnieper Valley assumed once more its pleasing prospect. From Poland and Galicia came immigrants. Kiev was rebuilt, although it never regained its former glory. In time this region, the Dnieper, Dniester and Bug valleys, began to be alluded to as *Malaia Roosia*, Little Russia, otherwise the Ukraine or border. As a separate province it existed until its peoples and territories were conquered by Ivan the Terrible and consolidated into the Greater Moscovy.

Little Russia now comprises the three governments of Tchennigoff, Poltava and Kharkoff. It is a region generously endowed by Nature, where "everything breathes of plenty, where the rivers flow brighter than

silver, where the gentle steppe winds rustle the grasses and the farm buildings are lost in the cherry groves." The population totals over 26.6% of the whole empire, and the density is greater there than in any other part. In the blood of the people are Turkish and Iranian strains, some Lithuanian and some Pole.

The Little Russian is brown-haired, tall and well built. His dialect, distinct from that of Great Russia, contains many Polish words, and is the nearest approach to-day to the original Slav tongue. While a faithful citizen of the Empire and a faithful Orthodox believer in the main, the Little Russian is independent and might, had he energy enough, be interested in the propaganda Austria has long been engineering for the revolt of the Ukraine against the Empire.

The discontent of the Ukraine is derived from linguistic rather than political causes. The Russian Government has forbidden the teaching of the Ukrainian tongue in the public schools—just as Germany has forbidden the teaching of Polish in her Polish provinces—and as the Little Russians possess this ancient and distinct dialect and a body of literature of their own, there is just reason for their wishing to preserve it. Its suppression is a very short-sighted measure on the part of the Government. Naturally the enemies of Russia have taken advantage of this administrative measure. During the present war the Ukrainian prisoners have been kept segregated from the other Russian prisoners in camps in Baden, treated with more consideration than the others, and made to feel that they had bitter grievance against their Government. Austria, in her efforts to alienate the fidelity of the

Ukrainians is only pursuing her usual policy of "Divide and Rule."

The other tide of emigrants that started from the Dnieper Valley settled in the northeast. A new Novgorod came into existence. Under the Grand Dukes of Moscovy, Moscow grew from a little outpost fort of the province of Vladimir to a full-fledged town, in fact into the administrative and ecclesiastical center of Russia, for the Grand Dukes of Moscovy conquered the territory that touched on it.

In going northward the people met and fused with Finnish and Tartar natives, docile, peaceable people, of the Volga and Oka Valleys, in regions that now constitute the center of Great Russia. Finnish and Tartar manners and customs were adopted by the newcomers, the native racial type, language, morals and beliefs going into the composite of the Russian nationality. Thus grew up the Moscovites of Great Russians (*Vielkoruss*), who now comprise 70% of the total population of European Russia.

The Great Russians are tall, well-built folk, with brown hair and blue eyes, flat faces and very white teeth. They are a vivacious people, alert, shrewd, fearless—characteristics bred in them through long, hard battles for livelihood in the forests and swamps. From their ranks came the settlers who first braved the Siberian wilderness and planted the flag of empire firmly in the Asiatic provinces.

The third ethnological group—7% of the whole—are the White Russians (*Bieloruss*), who occupy the upper Dnieper, a land singularly barren of charm or

natural resources. The people have an admixture of Lithuanian and West Finnish blood in their veins. Of all the Russians, they are the poorest class, given to drunkenness, laziness and an appalling aptitude for petty dishonesty. The soil of White Russia is very poor and the consequent crops negligible, save where the land is owned and worked by Poles. Such factories as are in this region were owned and operated—until the war began—by Germans. An illiterate body, boasting no literature to speak of, the White Russians represent the very sort of people many foreigners conceive all Russians to be.

## IV

Another and more important body—a warrior race quite separate from the men in the street—are the Cossacks. The word *kazak* originally meant freebooter, and in that word is the story of the origin of the class, a story of great romance.

In the beginning the Cossacks were inhabitants of Little Russia—the Ukraine—but their nomadic life had made them a mixed race, a people in whose veins ran Tartar, Turkish, Caucasian, Slavonic and Gothic blood. The Ukraine, which was the border land, had no limits and confines and the people were obliged to defend their homes against attack from all sides. Watchful waiting for a possible fight soon became a racial habit. Back and forth across the Ukraine swept the tides of conquest—Turks, Poles and Tartars. Like our New England forebears, the peasant, as a 16th Century contemporary put it, “went to work with a gun on his shoulder and a sword at his side.” Despite this precarious existence in the midst of warring peo-

ples, enough of the population survived to form the nucleus of the Cossacks.

They were Orthodox folk, trained in the art of war. For the furtherance of the faith and the exercise of the latter art, they formed themselves into a great brotherhood, the *Zaporogian Setcha*. This knighthood was not unlike King Arthur's. Its purposes were to go about righting wrongs, defending the poor and weak, overcoming the heathen and driving them from the earth. All men were free and equal in the brotherhood. At the head stood the *Ataman*, or chief, who was elected by the members; the government of the clan was in the hands of a Circle or assembly of the people. Thus from the start the Cossack Government was a republic, and as a republic it administered the affairs of the Ukraine for several generations.

It was a wild, free life they led in the borderland. (You can read of it in Sienkiewicz's *With Fire and Sword*.) Now they would battle against the heathen foe, now they would settle down and marry the heathen foe's daughters. Once a year the men of the brotherhood forsook their wives and retired into a military "retreat"—to use the religious application of the word—in their rendezvous among the islands of the Dnieper. What went on there history does not record; possibly maneuvers, undoubtedly a great deal of drinking and bragging.<sup>1</sup>

Under this romantic régime the Cossacks built up their own legends and colorful history. They swash-

<sup>1</sup> I use the word "bragging" advisedly. Quite apart from the fact that this is the custom of the sterner sex, it is the term used in the old *bylinas*, or folk epics, to describe the manner of speech of the heroes. Thus in the legend of "Quiet Dunai Ivanovitch" we find the phrase, "When all were well drunken, and the feast waxed merry, they began to brag."

buckled around the countryside, attacking anything not Orthodox—Catholic Pole, Tartar Moslem and Jew—making love when it pleased them, drinking copiously save in time of war (when to drink meant death by hanging), and altogether having a remarkably ideal time.

In the beginning they invariably fought on the side of the underdog, fought fearlessly and fiercely, and their name soon enough became synonymous with bravery and cruelty. This idealistic warfare was destined to pass away, however, for the Cossacks eventually degenerated into mere mercenaries, fighting on the side that offered the highest price.

During the latter part of the 16th and early years of the 17th Centuries, they fought successively against the Poles; with the Poles against Russia and Turkey; against Turkey; and then against Poland. They experienced a constant succession of peace and war with the Kingdom of Poland, of affiliation with it and rebellion against it. Finally, when the Ukraine became part of Moscovy in 1667, the Cossacks were enrolled in the Russian ranks.

The change of allegiance made them by no means loyal and faithful subjects. Numbering over 300,000 horsemen, fully equipped and hardened by warfare, they caused such internal trouble that the Moscovite Princes found just reason for suppressing them. Gradually their ranks were thinned and their leaders hanged. By the time of Ivan the Terrible they were subdued to such a degree of pliability that they could be trusted to serve the State to further its purposes.

Among the designs of the State at this time was expansion eastward and the conquest of the Siberian

tribes. Under Yermak, a fearless leader, the Cossacks crossed the Urals, defeated the Tartars at a spot near where now stands the city of Omsk, and battled their way through the wilderness and hostile tribes across Asia. By 1775 their *stanitsas* (fortified villages) were dotted along a line that formed the Great Road to the Pacific, and their standards had been carried across the Behring Straits and planted over Alaska. Ever since that time the Cossacks have been on the forefront of the Empire, protecting it against invasion from without and uprising within.

The Cossacks now number about 2,500,000, of which 185,000 are active soldiers. They are divided into ten *Voiskos*, or districts, which give them their distinct classification: Don Cossacks, Kuban, Astrakhan, Terek, Orenburg, Ural, Siberian, Semiryschensk, Amur and Usurri. In return for services rendered the Government they are granted special privileges. Their land is given them free of cost and they hold it free of taxation. They also possess hunting and fishing rights and the privilege of brewing beer. In addition they retain their peculiar social and political organization: each *stanitsas* (village division of the *Voiskos*) has its *Stanitsas Ataman*; public matters are decided, as in the beginning, by popular vote. The Tsarevitch was the chief *Ataman* of all the Cossacks.

The services the Cossacks render the State are a constant preparedness for war and for mobilization. Each trooper supplies his own horse and equipment, and he must be ready at a moment's notice to saddle up and ride off wherever the Tsar may command.

At the age of 18 a youth enters the army and for three years thereafter is in the "rookie" class. At 21



he joins a field regiment in which he serves four years. A second four years are spent in a regiment of the second class, and then he goes to a regiment of the third order. After this, he enters the reserve, serves there five years, and finally completes his career by being enrolled in the Opolchina, which is Russia's equivalent for the German Landsturm.

Although in the beginning lovers of liberty, avowed foes of the rich and protectors of the poor, the Cossacks have long since ceased to serve such idealistic ends. Soldiers, whose business it is to obey, they have been employed in putting down riots and *pogroms*—on every occasion where political and social unrest has to require their services. And in this capacity they have well earned their name for cruelty. Since they have no close political affiliation with the average folk, they have no sympathies and can be trusted to strike right and left once the order is given—an order that the soldier of the locality would be loath to obey. In times of peace they ride the far-flung Asiatic frontier, and by their presence protect and encourage the thousands of settlers who go there every year to take up life in Russia's Land of Promise.

While the majority of the Cossacks are Orthodox, a goodly number are *Raskolniks*, or Old Believers, who did not take to the new order of things ecclesiastical in the time of Peter the Great and the reformer Nikon.

For some time there has been agitated a restriction of Cossack privileges, but they have given such a good account of themselves in the present war that it is quite unlikely they will suffer any economic or political restrictions for some time to come.

## V

From the hour when Moscovy rose revived from the ashes of the Tartar fire, until the present generation, there has been an almost steady acquisition of peoples and lands by the Empire.

Siberia, wrested from the tribes, was Russian by the 16th Century, and several years before our own settlers had pierced the wilderness west of the Mississippi Russia was firmly settled in the extreme northwest of America. Thus was gathered into the folds of empire an expanse of territory twice the size of the Continent. peopled with a great diversity of nomadic tribes, speaking a variety of dialects and believing half a dozen faiths—Moslem, semi-Moslem, Buddhism, Shamanism and pure pagan. Since the building of the Trans-Siberian and the sweep of settlers into the Asiatic provinces, many of these tribes have dropped their nomadic life and clustered into villages. The presence of the Cossack *stanitsas* has helped develop their nominal citizenship into actual and active allegiance. Some of the bravest fighting in this war lies to the credit of these native tribesmen. In religion they are still Moslem, semi-Moslem, Buddhistic or pagan, despite the fact that until the Edict of Toleration (promulgated in 1905), they were classed collectively as Orthodox. To them is extended a toleration not characteristic of the European provinces of the Empire.

Since 1808, when Finland was acquired by Russia, the Scandinavian element has steadily been entering the Empire and the Protestant influence steadily increasing. The conquest of the Caucasus brought in the Georgians and Armenians—Mohammedans and

early Christians <sup>1</sup> by religion. The partition of Poland at the end of the 18th Century introduced a Roman Catholic element which before this time was not an important factor. Thus were the racial and national families assembled.

To recapitulate: The main divisions of the Russian people are the Great, Little and White Russians; the Siberian tribes that are now outnumbered eight to one by the settlers; the Georgians and Armenians; the Letts and Poles, the Lithuanians, Finns and Germans of the Baltic Provinces.

These groups represent Orthodox churchmen (69.9%), Roman Catholics (9.8%), Mohammedans (10.8%), Lutherans, semi-Mohammedans, Jews (4%) and pagans, beside a host of sects. They comprise sixty-four racial and tribal divisions, people both absorbed and unabsorbed, loyal and disloyal, speaking no less than 150 tongues and dialects and living in a variety of climates and environments from the Arctic to well-nigh the Equator, from the Pacific to the Baltic.

The political affinities of these people are as varied as their faiths and tongues. Within the past century the Great and Little Russians have experienced an active infiltration of Germans and Austrians, many of whom made no effort to adopt either the Russian tongue or Russian life. The Little Russians are constantly being urged on by Austrian and German agents to strike out for the freedom of the Ukraine. The in-

<sup>1</sup> While the world justly sympathizes with the sufferings of the Armenian people, it should not shut its eyes to the fact that no race under the sun is capable of more treachery, dishonesty and downright abominations than the Armenians. Russia has eminent justification for heavily policing their region, and Turkey finds the same measures necessary. In nine cases out of ten the Armenians have received according to their just merits.

habitants of the Baltic provinces—most of them lost now to Russia—were more German than Russ. As for the Pole—he loves Russia about as much as an Irishman loves England. In the Caucasus there has been one attempt to found a republic and the pro-Turkish element is always restive under Russian rule. In Siberia alone does there seem to be any unadulterated allegiance—mainly because the people there are too busy to bother their heads about fantastic political programs.

With such a motley and hyphenated population Russia can take no chances on sudden national awakenings, such as are in store for the United States unless, of course, we find means to amalgamate into lasting fealty the political and racial sympathies of those hosts of foreigners who are drawn to our shores by the money lure. Russia is not losing sight of her ultimate destiny in a welter of honeyed words and pleasing sentiments. Besides, as she has already learned by this war, the path of her progress lies not in a wholesale adoption of Western methods and ideals, but in a gradual growing up to them. To use the simile of Prof. Vinogradoff in his *Self-Government in Russia*, she is slowly turning around, swinging from East to West.

But she must turn on her own foundations and by the power of her own will and the energy of her own strength.

## CHAPTER III

### A DEMOCRACY IN THE MAKING

**R**USSIA to-day is a democracy in the making; or, to express it in terms of its past, it is gradually reverting to a democracy.

Contrary to the course of other European powers, Russia began as a democracy, evolved into an autocracy under the influence of the Mongol Khans and, later, under the necessity for forcing home Western ideals and for centralizing the government in the reigns of Peter the Great and Catherine the Great respectively. Ever since it has been struggling to attain its former state. Each of these political developments, it is well to remember, was made for the solidarity of the nation, and was begun with the ostensible purpose of public welfare, and, in many instances, by popular elective consent.

#### I

The peak of the autocracy is the Emperor. Because he is supposed to voice the will of the people (tempered by the will of God as he may interpret it!) he is given absolute authority. Hence the stroke of his pen came to be the most powerful agency in Russia. He wielded it irrespective of his people's wishes and contrary to the counsel of his ministers. Yet such authority has its advantages. With the stroke of the

pen were the serfs—43,000,000 of them—freed in 1861; whereas, in this country, the liberation of the slaves—only 3,500,000 in all—required four long years of bloody, internecine strife that rent the country in twain. With the stroke of the pen was the sale of vodka prohibited throughout the empire in 1914, and the largest single item of revenue enjoyed by the Government was automatically lopped off, a feat that, here in America—notwithstanding the fact that the liquor trade is not a Government monopoly—would be almost inconceivable.

Absolutism in Russia has grown in ratio to government monopoly. This monopoly has been assumed from time to time for the purpose of increasing the revenue on the one hand, and serving the public needs on the other. Such almost universal paternalism makes absolute authority possible. The people would seem to be caught between two fires. Not the fact that the Emperor always exercised this authority, but his ability to exercise it, was at once the strength and weakness of the Government.

Absolute authority was held to be necessary for keeping in line the motley of peoples and religions and political factors that comprise the Empire. In addition, it was a corrective to the wilfulness of the few and a safeguard to the many, who are illiterate, ignorant and economically dependent. It is this very discipline that has given the Russian people a unified purpose in times of great national crisis, such as the present European War. Summarized in its best terms, it is designed to work for the greatest good of the greatest number. Reduced to its worst terms, such authority and discipline fall heavily on those who are past the

need for it; of the latter group the numbers are increasing rapidly. There, in a nutshell, is the situation of the people versus the bureaucracy to-day.

## II

The story of the rise and decline of absolutism is not without its romance.

In the time of the Eastern Slavs and until the Mongol invasion in the 13th Century, the tribal government was democratic and representative, the citizens being free and equal under the law. The *Mir*, which exists to this day, was a government by the heads of the families. Embryo representation was also found in the government of the great trading cities, Novgorod and Pskov and the republics contiguous to them, which in the 12th Century had their *Vietches* or assemblies of citizens.

The conception of absolute authority was of Eastern source, a system learned from the Mongols, who, after the subjugation of the country, retired to their Eastern provinces and left the administration of affairs in the hands of local representatives. This authority was gradually acquired by the Grand Dukes of Moscow as they gathered strength in their capacity of local deputies of the Golden Horde. The Grand Dukes fought organization with organization, absolutism with absolutism. They thereby unified the scattered masses and gave them individual and collective strength to overcome the invader.

In the reign of Ivan III the authority was endowed with a sacred aspect. Ivan married Sophia, a Palæologus, niece of the last Emperor of Greece, and the Rus-

sian dynasty became related to the Byzantine, which was likewise the source and form of the Church. From its sacred plane it grew to despotism under the same Tsar, despotism that bore fruit in the conquest and consolidation of principalities fringing on Moscovy, but at the same time instilled into the masses that slavish fear of the Emperor's person and will which still exists to-day. It was Ivan III who took for his insignia the double-headed eagle of Byzantium, the crest ever since borne by Russia.

Even after this assumption of absolute authority the voice and vote of the people were still the power in the land. Despite his unspeakable methods, Ivan IV (The Terrible) was the active friend and protector of his people. When he came to the throne there existed in Moscovy the *Zemsky Sobor*, a consultative council formed of representatives of the various states, convened in times of great national crisis; and the *Boyarskaia Douma*, a permanent council of aristocratic landowners which directed the administration of affairs. Even this *boyar* authority was distasteful to the people, and, taking sides with the masses, Ivan set about to suppress the *boyar* and to better his people's lot.

Boris Goudonov, his successor but one, owed his accession to popular vote, yet he espoused the cause of the *Dvorianies*, or lesser nobles, that he might gain their support against the *boyar* landed aristocracy.

The great economic problem at this time was where to get labor. There was land enough, but not sufficient people to farm it, and those on the land never stayed permanently settled in one place. (From the beginning the Russ has always been possessed with a perfect mania for migrating about!) The *boyars* could



afford to pay their farmers sufficient wages to bribe them into "staying put"; the lesser nobles were not so fortunately situated. To satisfy the latter's requirements, Boris issued a ukase on St. George's Day, 1597 (St. George's Day is the Russian annual moving day—their first of May), forbidding all free laborers to leave the estates and farms on which they were working. Thus, by the stroke of the pen, did serfdom come into existence, to continue a gigantic political and economic problem for 300 years until, again by the stroke of the pen, it was abolished and 43,000,000 serfs became freed men.

Keenly alive to what this blow at Russian independence meant, the gentry and upper middle class took up arms against the aristocracy. Troublous times fell on the throne. One usurper after another arose, was overcome and disappeared.

Through all this the will of the people was gathering its forces. The fire of a great political and religious reform swept through Russia in the 16th Century. It quickened the lowly and the high, the lordly and the peasant. A solidarity gripped all classes. Russia must be saved! And once more national salvation was found in the inalienable right of the people; they restored the power of the ballot. By popular election was Mikail Romanov, scion of a family that had lively sympathies with the people, raised to the throne. Thus through the will of the people the present dynasty came into being.

The next Romanov to leave his mark upon Russia and the world was Peter the Great. He inherited the popular interest of his clan together with a Titanic ambition to chart the shortest and most efficient course to

their betterment. With his own hands he labored abroad, and then came back to teach his fellow countrymen what he had learned. He destroyed the power of the *boyar*, reformed the political and social order—basing it on Western types—and made the Church an arm of the State. He founded a new capital in the north and gave Russia her first navy. He created the Governing Senate, which was a representative body of the people, and granted the municipalities and provinces a form of self-government. The system of personal nobility also came into existence whereby a man's rank may depend on his individual services to the State and not on the doubtful services of an ancestor. In short, Peter the Great was at once the first democrat of Russia and its first real absolute ruler.

"There never was a reform that was not opposed by a Lion and an Ass." True to the proverb, this infusion of Western efficiency failed to meet with the approval of a large section of the people. The ecclesiastical reforms of Nikon had split the Church into the Old Believers, those who held to the old order, and the New. In addition Peter called in foreigners to help him formulate and teach his new systems, and the troubles of the people took on a new character.

Previous to this time the problems of the people were mainly such as arose among themselves; they now began to include the factor of foreign relations and foreign influence within the borders of Russia. Peter opened a window to Europe, which was well; but through that window have flown into Russia influences that have worked as much for her woe as for her weal. It has been the story of the Variagians all over again;

Russia's calling in foreigners to lend her a hand, and the foreigners eventually getting the upper hand.

From the time of Peter the Great on, the chart of Russian independence is as jagged and irregular as a mountain range. Now the people would approach freedom, now it was far from them. The political experience of the masses in these past 300 years may well be defined as an endeavor "to assert their own nationality in their own country."

The reign of Catherine the Great saw the people once more endowed with a semblance of control of their own affairs. Provincial and district assemblies of the Noblesse were instituted, the officers being elective; and a Commission, a representative convention of all the people, was called, but failed to materialize as a legislative body.

The next notable strikes upward were the freeing of the serfs in 1861 by Alexander II, the creation of courts of justice, and the establishing of the *Zemstvos*, the provincial assemblies elected by all classes of the people.

The next great step which has brought the Russian people nearer to the attainment of their original state of democracy was the enactment of the Organic Laws of October, 1905, and the Manifesto of March, 1906, whereby two legislative bodies were created, viz.:

The Imperial Council (*Gosudarstivenni Sovet*), a body much after the manner of the old *Boyarskaia Douma*, one-half of whose members are appointed by the Tsar and the other half elected by the *Zemstvos* and municipalities; and

The Imperial Douma (*Gosudarstivenni Douma*), an

elective assembly in which all classes and creeds are represented on equal footing.

### III

The Government of Russia can be cross-sectioned just as were the social classes in Chapter I.

At the head stands the Emperor, direct descendant of Mikail Romanov, who was chosen by the people. In him is vested the absolute authority. He can promulgate legislation and veto it. In this respect, however, his power is limited for, to quote the statute, "No new law may be promulgated without the assent of the Imperial Council and the Imperial Douma or enforced without the sanction of the monarch." In addition the Emperor is the supreme command of the army and navy, and the protector of the Church.<sup>1</sup> While nominally standing alone, he is actually supported by the prestige and offices of the royal family. Absolutism finds only its ultimate expression in his decrees.

For the execution of this power, authority is delegated to twelve Ministers of State, composing the Cabinet Council. The members are nominated by the Emperor and retain their portfolios subject to his approval. These are the ministries of Foreign Affairs, War, Navy, Finance, Education, Ways of Communications, Justice, Commerce and Industry, Imperial Court, Agricultural, Internal Affairs and Government Control. In addition to the Cabinet Council there are other executive institutions, the Cabinet, however, being the most important.

<sup>1</sup> The Emperor is required to take deacon's orders in the Orthodox Church before ascending the throne. His assumption of these orders is part of the coronation ceremonies. As head of both Church and State he then crowns himself.

Divine authority is protected and maintained by five agencies: (A) The Bureaucracy, which comprises the total body of administrative officers; (B) Governors of the Administrative Districts of which there are 78,<sup>1</sup> in whom rests the direct supervision of the district and who are responsible to the Tsar alone; (C) the Secret Police, commonly referred to as "The Third Division," or *Okhrana*, a detective system operating separately from the local police force. In addition, (D) the Church, as a branch of the State, owing its financial and temporary powers to the autocracy, can be counted as an upholder of the Absolute authority. To this list must be added (E) the Censor, who controls the printed word.

The highest juridical institution of the Empire is the Senate, which, in its various divisions and subdivisions, safeguards the law and exercises justice. The Senators are all appointed by the Tsar and hold the rank of Privy Councillor. Legislation must receive the sanction of the Senate before it becomes a law. It is in the Senate that much legislation is lost, owing to its alleged illegality.

Thus from the lowest *ispravnik* or district officer in the smallest hamlet to the Tsar himself, the pyramid of bureaucracy rears itself.

A gigantic weight? Yes. For the weight rests upon the people, and the pyramid is so constructed as to resist pressure—theoretically. Logically it would seem that this weight might be lifted by one of three methods: the growing strength of the masses; the crumbling of the pyramid itself through sheer decay,

<sup>1</sup>In European Russia are 49 Government Districts; in Poland, 10 (until the war); in Finland, 8; in the Caucasus, 7; and in Siberia, 4.

and under vicious assault from below; or finally by pressure and attack from nations without.

One by one these three methods have been tried with more or less success. The revolt of the Decembrists in 1825 brought but little good, and the work of the Nihilists in the '70's of the past century worked but a negligible benefit. The combination of pressure from foreign lands—either friendly or unfriendly—the growth of education and the increase of industries will undoubtedly bring to the Russian people the necessary reforms. This combined movement has been gaining strength since the beginning of the present century. The necessary cohesion was given it by the war.

#### IV

Of the two legislative bodies the Imperial Council is the older, having been established first as an advisory legislative body without the power of initiating legislation, its members being all appointed by the Emperor. By the reform laws of 1905 the advisory character of this chamber was changed and it became the upper house of the Russian Parliament, and to a degree a representative elective body.

The Emperor appoints half the members, including the President and Vice-President, thus retaining a majority of seats. The President holds his office for life or at the will of the Emperor. There are 196 members in the present Council; 18 representing the nobility, 6 the universities and academies, 12 the merchants' guilds of the municipalities, 34 the *Zemstvos*, and 22 the landed proprietors. They are elected for a term of nine years, one-third being seated at a time.

The Emperor may remove any member he chooses and order a new election.

The functions of the Imperial Council are identical with the Douma's; it has the power to initiate legislation and vote budgets. It also exercises certain administrative and judicial authority in such matters as the prosecution of high officials and the supervision of certain financial and railway matters.

For a matter of actual fact, very little legislation starts in the Imperial Council, its efforts being mainly directed either to the ratification or rejection of proposed bills sent up from the Douma. From the Imperial Council a bill, having had the ratification of both houses, is handed over to the Cabinet Council, then to the Emperor for his signature. Midway its course may be halted by the Council, which may deem it an unwise measure, or by the Senate, which may judge it illegal.

v

Both constitutionally and ethnologically the Douma can be compared to no house of representatives in the world. Its numbers include all creeds, walks of life and levels of intellect. Its representatives come from half a dozen races, speak as many tongues, yet all have equal footing. Freedom of speech is permitted, and, unless a member deliberately talks sedition, he is allowed the greatest liberty of expression. The reports of these speeches, freely reported in the municipal and provincial press, form a mass of evidence quite contrary to the conception Americans have of the rigid censorship exercised over political discussion in Russia. The Government does object to indiscriminate discus-

sion by people whose words will only cause unrest. The Douma is the official place for talking over such matters; moreover, the electoral law designs to assemble there the men best fitted for discussing just such problems.

The composition of the Douma and the history of the first two assemblies were matters of current newspaper and magazine report at the time, and the reader need only have his memory refreshed by a survey of the situation that brought the Douma into being.

On the emancipation of the serfs in 1861, several hundred thousand acres of Government land were divided among the 43,000,000 liberated peasants on the understanding that they were to pay for it during the course of the next fifty years. In theory this was just; in actual practice it worked out unjustly for the majority of the peasants. They had land, but they had to pay taxes. As freemen they were suddenly loaded with the responsibilities of citizenship. The growth of capital and industry caused a growth of the cities. Although the rural communities had their *Zemstvos*, the municipalities were not so organized, causing a breach between the urban proletariat and the peasant.

The growth of the wealthy landowners who kept the peasants in debt through heavy taxation, the increased interest in peasant affairs through the *V Narodny*<sup>1</sup> Movement, the labor troubles consequent on the growth of labor far in advance of legislation for labor, and the defeat of the Government forces in Manchuria—all these culminated in a great unrest that scored an active revolution in 1905. Throughout the Empire revolts

<sup>1</sup> *V Narodny*—to the people, the practice common among *intelligentsia* during the last century of living among the peasants and instructing them.



sprang up; rioting was the order of the day. The hand of the Government was forced. A Douma was created—at first only a representative body of the rich, then a representation of all the classes.

A great "lust for liberties" seized the Russian people. The first Douma was convened. Peasant leaders and socialists brought forward a mad program of reforms. When the Government refused to consider it, the representatives became embittered and unruly. Their anger swept through the country, the masses claiming that they had been deceived. A second Douma was convened. Its members were even more socialistic than those of the first, and upon them the mailed fist of the Government fell heavily. Stolypin, the Premier, one of the greatest men Russia has produced in modern times, ruled that pacification must come before legislation, and he omitted no act to hasten the end of internal disturbances. So summary were his methods and so swift <sup>1</sup> that by the time the third Douma assembled Russia was too cowed to fight and too absorbed in healing her wounds to give much regard to legislation.

From this maze of conflicting interests and revolts that harried and well-nigh dismembered Russia during 1905-7 we are only now beginning to be able to analyze, in the light of the intervening ten years, just what part of the Russian people revolted with the definite purpose of attaining self-government, and what part revolted because revolution was in the air and because it might bring freedom, license and the end of

<sup>1</sup> Between 1905-6, 26,000 persons were killed by the army and police, and 31,000 wounded; upwards of 175,000 were jailed. During 1908, the opening of the third Douma, 7,016 civilians were arrested and 2,340 condemned to death.

individual bondage to debt and taxes. Time has shown that an appalling amount of the revolution was misdirected energy and energy wasted, that a great deal of it was the mad riot of mobs hungry for blood and destruction, and that, for foreign readers, an appreciable amount of it was the creation of imaginative newspaper correspondents. Mavor, in his *Economic History of Russia*, has stated the situation in perfect justice: "In all the groups there seemed to rise a lust for power. There is no evidence of any widespread desire for popular government with all its possibilities and risks. Although there was a clamor for an assembly convened for the purpose of formulating a constitution, few realized what such an assembly meant; and probably very few would have been disposed to accept the compromises which any constitution formulated by any such assembly would have involved."

According to American standards—or better, according to American ideals—the Douma has made a poor showing. It is not justly representative of the people any more than is our House of Representatives. Moreover, its short ten years' annals read like a decline from brilliant though blind liberalism into a slough of deadly conservatism. The new broom, intending to sweep clean, only swept with a gigantic futile force that spent its energy in programs and fiery words.

For that reason the first and second Doumas were failures, if we weigh their value according to their constructive results. The representatives of the people demanded rights that their constituents refused to support either collectively or individually. The average Russian wasn't willing to do his bit.

The third Douma passed as a perfunctory meeting

## VI

In one department of self-government at least, the Russian people are fast making progress—in the *Zemstvos*:

These rural assemblies were established in 1864, three years after the Emancipation, and have been steadily growing in power and usefulness ever since. They are of two kinds: (1) The Executive Boards (*Uprava*) of the small town, equivalent to our select townsmen, and (2) the Assemblies of the Governmental Districts, the membership of which is composed of representatives elected from among the members of the smaller boards. The president of the local board is the elected *starosta* or elder of the town; in the larger groups the *Maréchal de Noblesse* is the head. A preponderance of seats in the larger assemblies is held by the nobility, a logical apportionment, since the gentry own most of the land and contribute most generously to its improvement. The procedures of both the local and district *Zemstvos* are subject to the supervision of the Governor as representative of the Imperial power.

Nominally the province of the *Zemstvos*' activities includes such matters as schools and school teachers, improvement of roads and bridges, adjustment of taxes, charities, fire protection and similar town and district affairs. In many instances they enjoy the financial aid of the Government, especially in the school budgets. In no case are the taxes levied by the *Zemstvos* to exceed 3% of the total valuation of property.

The story of the *Zemstvos* is not altogether a constant record of progress. They have suffered from their apprenticed hand, their lack of practical knowledge of

procedure and a weakness for fantastic action. Again and again have their procedures been blocked by reactionary members of the bureaucracy, and even in such late statesmen as Count Dmitry Tolstoy and Count Witté did they find active enemies. To this day they meet with prohibitions from the *Zemsky Natchalniks* and Peasants' Commissioners, who control the communal institutions of 43 of the governments.

It is a fact characteristic of Russian life that in defeat have the *Zemstvos* found victory. The very misfortunes of the people have given them their most active stimulus to growth and prestige.

During the past two generations there have been times when the Government, finding itself utterly helpless in the face of great crises, has been obliged to call on the *Zemstvos* for aid. Thus it was in the famines of 1898 and 1910, thus it was in the Japanese War, and so it has been in the present struggle. Not only have the *Zemstvos* proved themselves loyal, but they have quite shamed the Government by the dispatch and energy of their labors and contributions. Through the *Zemstvos* are the peasants being taught modern farming methods. Through the *Zemstvos* has been waged war against epidemics and plagues.

When the Government failed to meet the Red Cross demands of the Japanese War, there arose the Union of All *Zemstvos*, which undertook the work and carried it on to a satisfactory ending. This union for national work gave the assemblies an unprecedented solidarity, and, due to this solidarity among the people, was the movement for the Douma pushed on to a favorable conclusion. Not revolution but evolution of the will of the people brought the Douma into being. Since

then there have been congresses of agriculturists from the *Zemstvos* and other meetings of the Union representatives which indicate the growing power of these district assemblies. In 1912 their efforts to reorganize the local courts met with success in a favorable statute, peasant judges being elected to decide minor cases and administer local customs, their decisions being respected by the judges of the higher courts elected by the district assemblies.

The present war has brought the *Zemstvo* Union into serious prominence. It has joined with the Union of the Municipalities to establish and support hospitals, hospital trains, hospital and army stores, and to increase the supply of munitions. To quote one activity alone, the *Zemstvos* made and delivered, in exactly two months of 1914, 7,500,000 complete suits of underwear for the army. Their other activities have been equally swift and efficient. The union is now working on the sanitation of towns, the housing of the 2,000,000 refugees which still remain from the retreat from Poland, Lithuania and Volhynia, and a program of improvements to be undertaken after the war. In short, the labors of the *Zemstvos* have passed from merely district affairs to national, and the interests of the people even in the smallest towns have been turned from petty local problems and disputes to those great national affairs that Russia faces to-day and will face to-morrow.

## VII

Glancing through even this brief outline of the Government, it is possible to discern many points where provision is deliberately made for the bureaucracy to

drive conservative and reactionary wedges into the machinery of liberal legislation and self-government. As representatives of the Emperor, responsible to him alone, the governors and governors-general have a controlling voice in the *Zemstvos*. Higher up, the Imperial Council and Senate are so constituted as to exercise a prohibitory influence over the Douma. Thus the attempts of the people at self-government are, in a measure, checkmated by the bureaucracy.

At this point the question is naturally raised, How can Russia ever expect to advance with such reactionary influence constantly retarding the course of progress? The answer to this problem, misunderstood or misjudged, is the rock on which much sympathy with Russia splits.

Analyze the question and immediately it divides itself into two separate propositions: (1) What do we mean by Russia—the Government as the nation, or the people as a conglomerate mass? (2) Are the mass of the people in a sufficiently enlightened state to undertake free and unguided control of their own affairs?

Granted that a solidarity of government is requisite for the well-being and progress of a nation, it is evident that in Russia, as in any other nation, there must be a government that will act for the people both in internal and foreign affairs. Were the Government of Russia handed over completely to the masses to-day, indescribable chaos would ensue. Within a month the Russian Empire would be divided into a dozen warring factions—a condition from which other nations would not be slow to profit.

Up to March, 1917, Russian revolutions invariably lacked a unity of purpose. There has always been

a rush for liberties. The principle of every-man-grab-for-himself has been all too evident and, in a measure, has been responsible for the failure of the revolutions. The present international struggle has done much to give the people a unified purpose. Unlike the Japanese War, which was conducted by and for the bureaucracy at the expense of the people's interests, the present war finds the people devoted heart and soul to the cause.

The other question: "Are the people in a sufficiently enlightened state to undertake free and unguided control of their own affairs?" is best answered by the statistics on education. During the reign of the present emperor more has been accomplished for education than during any other epoch, but the situation is still far from desirable or even promising. Only 21% of the population can read and write.<sup>1</sup> On an average the Government devotes only 6% of its budget to education, although between 1907 and 1912 the expenditure was doubled. The greatest activity has been shown by the *Zemstvos*, which now devote an average of 30% of their budgets to education.

According to the latest available statistics (1914), there are 127,477 schools of all kinds in the Empire, with a total attendance of 8,030,088 pupils. Both the Douma and the *Zemstvos* are seriously considering this problem of education, and it is not unlikely that after the war this will be an avenue of great progress, full of promise to those who look for Russian democracy.

The question of the ability of the people to govern themselves also depends on the condition of the mass of the people. Until 1914 Russia possessed a peasantry

<sup>1</sup> The figures for Spain and Portugal, incidentally, were not far in advance of the Russian a few years ago.

and a proletariat that suffered from the attacks of two implacable enemies, excess of drink and lack of work. The one was permitted by the Government, the other was due to the long winters during which work on the farms came to a standstill. The growth of industries consequent on the war has given the peasant something to do. The universal adoption of temperance has given the *moujik* a clear head. He saves his money now, he commits less crime and is given to less folly. Moreover, he can think now whereas before he only talked.

The social reforms that the war has brought will undoubtedly leave their marks on the Government. Because of their increased ability to govern themselves, the *Zemstvos* will doubtless be given more opportunity for the exercise of that right. There will be a quickening of interest in their behalf, and the privilege will be extended to those districts that as yet have not been granted a *Zemstvo* government. In a word, from the lowest member of the *Zemstvo* to the representatives in the Douma, Russia will be going to school to learn self-government by experimental methods.

Considering the situation in this light, one can readily see the wisdom of continuing the semblance of dynastic direction for some little time. By this I do not mean to infer that the bureaucracy is universally moved by any highly idealistic altruism for the welfare of the people and the progress of the government. Far from it. Russia has her Mark Hannas and her Chauncey M. Depews. The bureaucrat is human and the grab spirit is strong within him. But I do mean to impress the point that not all aristocrats are bureaucrats, nor have all bureaucrats been dyed-in-the-wool thieves, grafters and poltroons. There are



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bureaucrats in favor to-day, and more of them are coming into favor as the days go on, who have a lively liberal consciousness, who are moved by high, progressive ideals. And in their hands the interests of the people are safe.

Meantime, what will become of the revolutionist?

## CHAPTER IV

### THE THINGS HE REVOLTS AGAINST

**T**WENTY years from now the rarest thing in Russia will be the revolutionist. Already the melodramatic, wild-haired, wan-faced, bleary-eyed Nihilist is passing away. Youths who a decade previous hurled bombs had almost all gone into business when the war started.<sup>1</sup> Business pays, bombs do not. What bloody revolution failed to accomplish, peaceful economic evolution is accomplishing. Twenty years, and the martyr type of which we read so much in our daily press will be as extinct as the dinosaur.

#### I

There is that indescribable element in almost every Russ which impels him to be, like the Irishman at Castle Garden, "agin" things generally.

I have always suspected that that Irishman had been drinking, and was out of a job. Constant discontent is an offspring of constant alcoholic stimulation and the lack of something to do. It is engendered by ennui and mad passion.

<sup>1</sup>This statement can safely be made despite the strikes and labor troubles that broke out in Russia in 1914. Since the war it has been discovered that much of this unrest was engineered by the German Embassy with the view of damaging Russian credits abroad. It will be recalled that German agents employed the same labor methods in their efforts to stop the manufacture and shipment of munitions here in America.

Until 1914, when the Tsar's ukase prohibiting the manufacture and sale of vodka was promulgated, vodka, the raw potato whiskey of the masses, did more to prevent the peasant from improving his lot than any single agency. Private firms manufactured it and the Government distributed it, earning thereby the tidy sum of \$300,000,000 a year. An average of one vodka *kabak* (dram-shop) to every 200 souls was the generous way the peasant was accommodated. Yet it was among these very peasants that the prohibition movement started. By 1905 so strong had grown the sentiment against the traffic that the Peasants' Union resolved to rid themselves of the Government gin-shops by no less a measure than forcible destruction.

This was not, however, the usual procedure. Local option had been extended to the *Zemstvos*, and they proceeded to exercise the privilege. With singularly clear foresight they comprehended—what those in power completely failed to grasp until the exigencies of war forced it upon them—that it is anything but fair weather “when good fellows get together with a stein on the table.” No good song rang clear through the peasant land; famine and disease stalked in the reeling *moujik's* tracks, and after them came the Jew money-lender. The peasant suffered, his wife suffered, his children suffered, and his fields gave scant increase.

The full-breasted Russian mother contributes nobly her share. She customarily has anywhere from six to twelve children, of which one-third die. The infant mortality of 32.7% puts Russia at the head of the Powers in this lamentable particular. The average mortality of 29% gains her a similar undesirable place. Vodka has had much to do with this alarming mor-

tality, for the *baba*, the *moujik* wife, shared her husband's weakness for the bottle.

Drunkenness, moreover, bred laziness, and the farmer whose land was a long distance from town neglected it or cultivated it carelessly. Famine came—in 1898 and again in 1910—when the people of twenty governments went starving because the crops had failed.

To recapitulate, in the past the *moujik* has been over-stimulated alcoholically. He also has had scarcely enough to keep him busy the year round. This condition has existed for generations. Little wonder that in the *moujik's* soul smoulders the spirit of discontent. Part of it is discontent with himself; part, justifiable envy of the lot of others; and, to give him his full due, the major part is the lot imposed upon him by mal-administration. Eighty per cent of the population of Russia is *moujik*, while the entire rural population constitutes 86%. A great portion of the political and economic problems of Russia, then, concern themselves with the *moujik*—the man on the farm. The things he revolts against are, in the main, the revolting points of Russia.

He revolts against debt; against taxes which keep him in debt; against the amount of land apportioned to him, as against that owned by his more fortunate fellows, or by the gentry; against the control of his local assemblies by representatives of the bureaucracy; against exploitation by political factions and by Jews; and in some instances against the Church. The censor holds but little terror for him, since he is generally too illiterate to write or read, but he has a wholesome and logical regard for the *gendarme* and *ispravnik*, who are

apt to overhear his fervid speeches and clap him into jail until he cools off.

An empty stomach, an empty larder, a ruined field—these seem to be, in the long run, the most cogent forces which drive the *moujik* to revolt.<sup>1</sup> While by no means all *moujiks* are poverty-stricken and bound by debt, a great majority are in constantly straitened circumstances as a result of poor crops, brought about partly by “the acts of God,” as the insurance policy puts it, partly by ignorance of up-to-date agricultural methods, lack of modern farming machinery and utensils, the inevitable vodka, sheer laziness, and the way in which the land was distributed prior to the Stolypin land reforms. The Government and the *Zemstvos* are endeavoring to alleviate much of this distress by establishing agricultural schools and farming credits. According to the latest available figures (1913) there are more than 300 special agricultural schools, as well as 210 experiment stations—a total of 5,000 instructors in all—the majority of them being supported by the *Zemstvos*. The congestion on the farms and the unfair distribution of land are being solved by emigration to Siberia and by the working of the Stolypin reforms of 1907, just referred to, whereby 36,000,000 acres were redistributed and 2,000,000 acres added to the public lands, making 2,000,000 new farms in all, which are owned and cultivated by the peasants.

The *moujik's* distrust of the Jew has a reasonable basis. The Jew with whom he is concerned is either

<sup>1</sup> Some of the peasant revolt is quite incomprehensible—save one attribute it to distrust and ignorance—and many of his uprisings are of a character that makes one lose sympathy for him. Thus in the cholera epidemic of 1902 peasants deliberately destroyed hospitals erected for their care, and killed doctors and nurses. It was another expression of the “agin” attitude.

a middleman or a money-lender. In both capacities his methods have been objectionable and his interests usurious, for he takes advantage of ignorance and poverty. The average *moujik* is not shrewd; the average Jew is, and in a bargain the *moujik* is worsted nine times out of ten. The Jew holds the mortgage over his head like a club. He is the only crow that fattens in a famine land. With one great cause for debt—vodka—abolished, the *moujik* may be able to get on his financial feet, and the story may be changed. In addition, the *Zemstvos* in many districts have replaced the Jew as middleman for the sale of crops and especially for the sale of *Kustarny*, the peasant handicraft wares.

So far as the peasant's personal feeling is concerned, he revolts against the Church only in a good-natured fashion. The custom of feeing the clergy either by cash or by kind often falls as a heavy burden on him. During the peasant troubles of 1905 the natives of the village of Mashkova Suren, to quote one example, went so far as to draw up their own table of church charges: 3 roubles instead of 8 for a marriage; one rouble instead of 3 for a funeral; 12 copecks instead of 50 for a baptism and burial; and 20 copecks instead of one rouble for thanksgivings. The *moujik* also has a case against the Church for the idleness which it forces upon him. As there are 124 feast-days on which no work is supposed to be done, in addition to the fifty-two Sundays, the farmer is deprived of a goodly share of his working year.

There is still a third phase of his economic position in regard to the Church: At the present counting the Church owns some 6,750,000 acres of land in the most

fertile regions, the center and south of Russia, which it is making no effort to improve. This land is rented to the peasants at a rate that is scarcely generous, to say the least. Finally, it is the Church that is the most relentless foe of popular education and the one barrier which stands between the ignorant peasant and the light of ordinary schooling.

## II

Unquestionably the war has been the greatest stimulus for the betterment of the peasants individually. It has raised the standard of living. This can be seen by the increase in savings deposits. To quote the figures assembled by the Russian journalist, W. T. Tcherkesoff, "Before the war the average yearly savings deposits were between 7,500,000 and 8,000,000 roubles. During the first year, when vodka was prohibited, they rose to 53,000,000, and in the first six months of 1916 to 60,000,000 roubles. The State Bank, which had formerly 7,400 savings banks in the country, during the war has been obliged to double that number."

Although some critics might read in these figures only the effect of the vodka prohibition, it must be remembered that the war opened up many more opportunities for making money than the peasant ever before possessed. Whereas previously the winter months were spent in idleness, the peasants now are kept busy at *Zemstvo* and municipality work, in making munitions and in the factories. This new-found prosperity has not been without evil results, however. The quick wages and the unprecedented size of them have bred

in the peasant a sudden capacity for forgetting the rights of others. Peasants have refused to ship to the cities any of their hams, for example, because the Government fixed the maximum price, which the *moujik* farmer was not pleased to accept. Consequently, while the countryside in Russia has had plenty to eat during the war, the food situation in the cities was very grave. Sudden wealth, like sudden liberty, is a dangerous boon to grant an ignorant peasantry.

The war has brought the *moujik* as a class the benefit of solidarity in his Union of All *Zemstvos* and in the coöperation of the *Zemstvos* with the municipalities. Although as yet the work is mainly Red Cross, this solidarity will bear fruit in the sympathies of the peasants. Soldiers coming back from the front will bring the added benefit of having mingled with troops from other parts of the Empire and from other lands.

As a whole, the war has given the Russian people a singleness of ideal—Russia. It has made them more patriotic and more religious. Relentlessly has it shown them who was friend and who was foe. It has made them work, and the work has come in new channels, for *moujik* and urban proletariat alike have benefited by the necessary growth of industries consequent on the war.

### III

The revolt of the *intelligentia* and the urban proletariat is quite a different matter from the discontent of the *moujik* on the land. In the one case the problem is agrarian, in the other, industrial and political.

In the towns and cities the cause of much discontent is the refusal of the Government to recognize labor



unions; the censorship, which is at once destructive to thought, stupid, and a prohibition that only provokes and invites fracture; the Church as a corporation that enjoys immense privileges and at the same time an enormous income; the excessive and unscrupulous activities of the Third Division and its *agents provocateurs*; and the Government's attitude toward labor and the working classes generally.

Among the *intelligentsia* must be classed the university students who in the past have been an active revolting element.

In this respect it would be a blessing to Russia were the *gendarmierie* and Third Division gifted with the faculty—so amply possessed by the American police—of “looking the other way.” Active and destructive revolt in Russia has often been the doing of adolescents, the idealistic madness of undergraduates and of men and women with sophomoric minds. This statement is not intended to belittle the heroism and sacrifices of countless noble souls who have poured out their life-blood for Russian freedom; but the fact remains that much revolt has been a lamentable waste of misdirected youthful energy.

The sanest method of handling such cases is to ignore the activity altogether, let revolutionists speechify and write until their wrath is assuaged. Forbid it, and the evil only grows and authority loses respect. As even Count Witté expressed it, “Nothing is more apt to ruin the prestige of authority than frequent and extensive employment of repression.”

Many a Russian revolutionist has suffered more from pent-up expression than from burning ideals,

more from being provoked into revolt by the police than from altruistic enthusiasm.

If Russian college lads would only learn to play baseball and football and tennis (games are practically unknown in Russian universities), half the student trouble would be avoided. Revolt and the zeal to reform the world are well-defined stages of adolescence. American lads suffer as much from it as do Russian, only the American lad kicks and runs it out of his system. Russia spends to-day the huge sum of \$30,000,000 yearly on ordinary police activities and maintenance, and \$4,000,000 to maintain the *gendarmarie*. Think what different reading the story of the Russian universities would make were one-tenth of that sum invested in stadiums, athletic fields and athletic equipment!

The *agent provocateur* is another development of the secret police activities that is wholly despicable and stupid. Intended to nip trouble in the bud, it is more often employed to cover up the misdeeds and failures of officials. When national crises appear, such as the present war, the value of a secret police is apparent and no nation can afford to be without it. But living under a constant fear of police surveillance and police investigation, knowing not who is friend and who is foe, stupefies the conscience of a people, deadens the moral sense and all too often—as shown by the reaction of some of the *intelligentia* after 1906—results in either a relapse into decadence or a retreat into vague and inactive mysticism.

The freedom for which the people have recently struck is a freedom for safe and normal living—the right to live without eternally looking back.

## IV

The censorship of Russian newspapers and magazines is unquestionably an affront and a burden to intelligent readers. I believe the burden is more difficult to bear there because the censorship is more obvious in Russia than in any other land. Here in America we speak of "muzzling" the press; in Russia they speak of censoring it. The difference lies in the methods employed and the final printed appearance of the journal. In America the censoring is done before the paper goes to press and is accomplished in the office of the owner or at the desk of the managing editor, who has his orders from "higher up." In Russia the galley sheets or the printed paper is submitted to the censor who, having his orders from "higher up," cuts out or blacks over the forbidden passages. The American paper does not look censored, the Russian is obviously so.

There have been numberless occasions when the censorship of the press has been used to cover up the failures and misdeeds of officials in Russia, but cannot the same be said of the American press at times?

Censorship forbids the free expression of opinion. Now, the Russian newspaper contains very little news and a great deal of opinion in the form of editorials, essays, critiques and *feuilletons*. What the thinking people think about a situation interests readers in Russia more than the things that actually happen. Hence there is a greater expression of opinion *per se* than there is in American newspapers and a greater opportunity for running counter to the opinions of the censor. Expression of opinion in American journals is

practically limited to two or three columns of editorials, a few letters from readers, a cartoon and a humorist's column. The rest is news, and between newspapers is the liveliest competition not to miss news items, so that it is practically impossible to censor a news item out of all the papers. "Muzzling" the press in America invariably comes from a financial source, rather than a political, as it does in Russia. Thus, previous to the war the criticism of German methods in Russia was universally censored. Again, in New York City six months before the arrival of Billy Sunday the editorial writers and humorists were free to criticize that evangelist's methods all they wished; but so soon as certain moneyed interests undertook to finance the campaign in New York the order went forth to every newspaper office in the city forbidding adverse criticism of Sunday. In other words, the free expression of thinking men in newspaper offices was censored before it found expression on paper. Little wonder that the Russians refer to "Yankee tricks"!

## v

The Russian liberal is a different person from the revolutionist in that, in the majority of cases, his bump of level-headedness is more pronounced, and he recognizes that lasting reform can come only by slow stages and through legitimate channels. He is not restricted to any one class, and his numbers are increasing every day. Because of this Russia will pay more attention to her liberal men of influence than she has in the past. The European War has forced liberalism on Russia through the two agencies of economic and military

necessity and her dealings with powers in which liberalism is more firmly established.

Reactionary bureaucrats can readily read the writing on the wall. They know that, once liberalism creeps into legislation to any extent, the business of being a reactionary will have its disadvantages. From the very beginning the bureaucracy has taken its toll of "graft," and few members of it, indeed, have been above the persuasion of the easily earned coin. This was the awful revelation of the Japanese War and of the opening months of the present struggle. "The cohesive power of public plunder" was enormous. That much of it has been broken and its upholders penalized by death or imprisonment stands to the credit of those in authority.

## VI

The Jew is a turbulent political and economic factor in Russia, and, as one cause of unrest, cannot be passed over without a survey of his status.

By the Government and by the bulk of the population the Jew is considered a foreigner. This fact should always be remembered in judging the Jewish situation, because—whether one agrees with it or not—it explains the Pale, or segregation of Jews into restricted areas, and is the reason for the average Russian's violent expression of disgust when foreigners class Russian Jews as Russians.

To Americans all Russians are alike; to Russians there is a clear-cut distinction between national and racial affinities. The Russian is a loyal subject, he loves his motherland and is generally willing to stay there. The Jew, on the other hand, will migrate wher-

ever there is opportunity for making money. More than nine-tenths of the emigrants from Russia to foreign lands come to the United States. Of them, 41% are Jews, 5.5% Germans, 5.9% Finns, 25% Poles, 10.2% Letts and Lithuanians and 11.3% Russians proper.

Because of her classification of the Jew as a foreigner, the Russian Government is making no haste to conclude a new commercial treaty with the United States. As neither party loses very much, so far as mutual commercial benefits are concerned, Russia sees little necessity for backing down from her position.

The discrimination against Jews takes two forms; the restriction of the number of Jews in the public schools, and the Pale already mentioned. Jews are permitted in the schools to the extent of 2% to 5% and even 10% in the Asiatic provinces. For those who are not so fortunate as to be included in the chosen group, there are private schools which require a fee for tuition. This is no misfortune for the Jew, since he has his own Kheder, Talmudtory and Eshiboty schools both in the Pale and in the cities, just as the Moham-medans have their own Medress and Melstelle. Moreover, many sincere orthodox Jews object to the religious teaching given in the public schools, as a form of intolerable proselytizing to which they will not subject their children. It is my frank opinion in this matter that the objection of the Jew to his educational exclusion is, in most cases, a matter of roubles and copecks. In the public schools he does not have to pay, in the private he does.

The selection of the 2-5% causes many amusing incidents. Authorities who happen to have no sympathy

for their Semitic fellows will select the permitted percentage from the top of the list—skim off the alphabetical cream, as it were. Hence in many towns there is a great rush to change names about the time that the sons are ready for school; you find Zambriskies becoming Abramovitches over night!

There are sixteen *Cherta Osedlosti* or lines of settlement in which Jews are permitted to reside; these include Poland, where the Jews may live wherever they choose. The rule governing the Pale does not apply to non-Talmudical Jews, nor to dentists, druggists, merchants of the first and second guilds, nor to those who have a university education or its equivalent, nor to descendants of soldiers who fought under Nicholas I. In other words, only the lower class Jews are restricted to the Pale.

Here again is a situation that Americans may find difficult to understand until they find a parallel in their own country. That parallel can be found in the "Save New York" Movement. During the past year merchants of New York City with business on Fifth Avenue have become alarmed at the unprecedented number of manufacturing lofts creeping up into the better shopping districts of that avenue. In order to "save New York," to save their business, they inaugurated a movement to restrict factories of this sort to a zone. The factories were objectionable for two reasons; they lowered the value of property and at noontimes they flooded the pavements with sweat-shop workers—Jews to a man—whose congregating there made it both troublesome and offensive to desirable shoppers in that neighborhood. So the Fifth Avenue merchants have

established a Pale beyond which sweat-shops cannot pass. They have even gone further; in order to enforce the Pale they have agreed to boycott those manufacturers who do not respect the required limits.

Were this action taken in Russia to-day, to-morrow our papers would be full of alarming reports on the cruel discrimination against Jews. As it happens in America, we call it "saving New York." New York merchants object no more to the desirable Jews than does the Russian, but they do seriously fear the commercial and real estate decline that inevitably results in a neighborhood on the swarming there of Semitic proletarians.

There is another word that Americans have become accustomed to in reports from Russia. I refer to *pogrom*. A *pogrom* is not necessarily anti-Jewish; it is any kind of a riot. Thus, in one day—October 18th, 1905—*pogroms* took place in 200 cities, a counter-revolution against all revolutionists—Russian, Jewish or Tartar, conducted by mobs and directed by the Black Hundred, the reactionary society. During the troublous times of 1902-7, 40% of the revolutionists were Jews (in some districts 90%!), which accounts for many of the subsequent riots against them, for the Jews more than once have exploited the *moujik* to attain their own political ends. "Jew-baiting," on the other hand, is a thoroughly despicable practice, condemned by all Russians of standing as a custom that does more harm to Russia in one hour than she can undo in a year.

The *pogrom* is no more defensible than any other riot, much less so when it arises out of a corner case of "Jew-baiting" by loafers. But because Jews have



suffered in the consequent riots and in counter revolutions is no reason for supposing that they were wholly exonerated of blame. The Jew is just as capable of provoking popular fury as any other mortal. If the blow falls where his head happens to be, the blow is also falling where there happen to be the heads of both innocent and guilty Christians.

The practice of the *pogrom* has its roots deep in the race of Russia. The Cossacks have always been the sworn foes of the Jew, or of anything, for that matter, that is not Orthodox. It is a racial hatred, a racial distrust, a racial fear. Some of it is caused by commercial jealousy; most of it is savagely primitive. In only two countries under the sun does racial hate take such violent forms—in Russia and America. And, after reading accounts of our lynching bees, can one blame the Russ for commenting on our inconsistency in criticizing him for his *pogroms*?

Russia owes a great deal to the Jews and she will never forget her debt. They are among her bravest fighters—250,000 of them. They have contributed musicians, scientists, authors, merchant princes and scholars to her ranks of great men. But—and this it is only fair to remember—there have been other great men in Russia beside Jews, just as there are other problems beside the Jewish problem.

Foreign writers invariably over-estimate the seriousness of the Jewish situation, just as writers foreign to America over-estimate the negro problem and Tammany Hall. Were America as bad as it is painted, we would be wholly occupied doing two things; suppressing and lynching negroes and prosecuting grafter poli-

ticians; and these would constitute the sum total of our worries.

The Jewish situation is only the smallest of a score-odd problems that adolescent Russia is trying to solve; moreover, it is mainly a sectional problem, just as is the negro question. Out of a total population of 182,000,000 souls, the Jews represent but 4.05%. There are more dissenters in Russia than Jews and, until the Edict of Toleration, their existence was no more secure than the Jews'. Why then paint the Jews as fighting for their life against Russia, or Russia as fighting for her life against the Jews? Russia is doing quite the opposite—she is speeding them to our shores!

What Russia has been fighting for her very life against are the Germans.

## VII

When he said that Peter the Great opened a window on Europe for Russia to look through and learn how to conduct her household, Pushkin spoke conservatively. Peter flung open a door, a wide door.

Up to that time the number of unassimilated foreigners in Russia was negligible. Greeks had come in at the time of Ivan III's marriage with Sophia, and so had some Italians, for Sophia was educated in Rome and held a warm spot in her heart for the sons of Italia.

The door that opened in the reign of Peter the Great disclosed Russia as a possible market for exploitation and commerce. Germans came and English, some French, some Swedish and some Scotch. You still encounter Russians with very English and Scottish names, descendants of these first settlers, who know no word

of English. The same can be said of the descendants of the early German settlers who came to Moscow, started the first foreign quarter of that city, built the first theater and laid the foundations of Russian dramatic arts.

Until 1915 one found a great scattering of Germans throughout the Empire, who were totally unabsorbed and obviously in Russia for none other than commercial purposes together, of course, with those espionage capacities in which all German commercial agents serve the Fatherland. Consequently one makes a remarkable discovery in visiting Russia; he can travel the length and breadth of the Empire and, unless he goes great distances from the railroads and towns, German will carry him everywhere. French and Polish are found among the upper classes; English rarely, save in the case of a traveled merchant or an officer who will have a reading acquaintance with it. But in German all classes of any consequence have a good grounding. This was necessary. If one wanted to conduct business he had to speak German! And therein lies the story of the quiet, steady Prussian invasion of Russia. For the past century the Germans have had Russia hypnotized. For 300 years they have guided the hand of the Government. Only during the past two years have the people awakened to this fact.

It would require a goodly-sized volume to tell in detail the entire story of Germany in Russia. In lieu of that we can only note here some of the salient points of the situation.

The founding of the new capital in the north, St. Petersburg, attracted hosts of gentlemen adventurers, who lost no time in getting into the graces of those in

power and in placing their hands on the reins of government. These foreigners, mainly Germans, gained a predominant power. Inter-marriage with German dynasties also sealed the tie of blood relationship. Barons of the Baltic Provinces began to come into their own. Learned Germans acquired high posts in the universities and academies. By the time of the Empress Ann (1730-1740) German influence over the Russian Government had grown to such proportions that the favorite of the Empress was a German, Biron, who directed an unrelenting prosecution of all who objected to German rule. It is one of the startling contradictions of Russian history that administrative exile to Siberia—among the darkest pages of Russia's story—was first instituted by a German for Russians who were anti-German!

Catherine the Great, who while herself a Prussian was in many ways one of the most Russian of Russian monarchs, showed a decided weakness for Germans. She imported great colonies of German farmers to teach the Russian peasants the arts of agriculture and, to make their stay pleasant, gave each man 160 acres of the best land free of taxes, duties and military service, and granted the colonies the privilege of self-government.

Alexander I, a dreamer and idealist, sought his ideal for Russia in German manners and customs. His Holy Alliance was little more than a promise of Russian help to Austria and Prussia in the furthering of their dreams of empire. It was Alexander I who, on asking the great General Yermolov what reward he desired for his services to the State, was given the amazing reply,

"To be promoted German; rewards would then follow of themselves." <sup>1</sup>

Nicholas I, Alexander's successor, saw only one way for Russia to improve—by a wholesale adoption of German methods. This resulted in a great growth of the bureaucratic power, especially in the power of the Baltic Barons. In fact, so thoroughly did Nicholas believe in German methods and Germans generally that when charges of fraud were brought against two of them he dismissed the case, saying, "They being Germans could not have committed such a crime." The Minister of Foreign Affairs in this reign and in the early years of the reign of Alexander II was a German by the name of Nesselrode, who never in the course of his life took the trouble to learn Russian! From that time on until the reign of Alexander III, the present emperor's immediate predecessor, German was the language of the Russian diplomatic circle and of diplomatic correspondence.

German colonization of Russia began to assume serious proportions during the reign of Alexander III, and the diplomatic relations of Russia with powers other than Germany took on a new character. During the reign of the present emperor Prussian statesmen have time and again guided the course of the Russian Government. Prussian influence is discernible behind the Russo-Japanese War; it attempted to arouse bitter feeling against France—even threatening war when the French Entente was proposed. The Entente was consummated, and Germany forced to accomplish her ends by other means.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *Russia and Democracy*. By G. de Wesselitsky. Page 22. New York, 1916.

At this time started the systematic colonization of the frontier provinces of Russia—the Vistula region, the Baltic and southwest Russia. Colonies were planted in the immediate neighborhood of strategic points—railroads, bridges and such. Large German syndicates bought up the estates of Russian nobles and sold the land to German farmers, who developed it with cheap Russian labor. The commerce of the towns also fell into German hands. These various phases of the German invasion culminated in the Russo-German commercial treaty, which provides for Russia's supplying Germany with raw materials at a low rate and receiving them back in the manufactured form at a high rate. As a consequence of this invasion, the frontiers of Russia to the West were surrounded by peoples alien in sympathy to the country, many of whom were Teutonic spies; the industries were crippled and the commerce was at the mercy of German merchants.

Germany played well her rôle in Russia. She controlled the press of the country to such an extent that, if a newspaper printed any articles with anti-German sentiments, it was forthwith censored out of existence. As for the news to foreign lands, that was wholly in German hands. Berlin is the news-distributing center for countries to the East, and German officials controlled what was sent out from Russia to the world. Reports of uprisings were out of all proportion to the fact; many were manufactured out of whole cloth. When news favorable to Russia came along, the Berlin censors quietly quashed it. Until the war started the good reports of Russia were mostly in German wastebaskets.

With the opening of the war the Russian people

awakened to the singular fact that their Government, their industries, their banks, their schools, their theaters, their papers and magazines, their shops and many of their farms were German or Germanized. In the early months of the war the Government was crippled because of the preponderance of Germans and Pro-Germans in it. Many were still there, even after two years and a half of war. Fortunately their situation was far from pleasant. They were obliterated by the recent over-night revolution.

The great economic and military weakness of Russia today lies in the fact that she has depended on Germany for far too many things. If she is to attain her majority among the powers, she must shake herself free of the German habit. Certainly, if she is to maintain her standing with France and England she can no longer truckle to German influence and German orders, her revolutions can no longer be started at the whim of the German ambassador, nor the wheels of her industries stilled because German merchants wished them stilled. It is far more important for the Russian people to revolt against the German in their midst than against the bureaucracy as a system or the Jew as a turbulent political and economic factor.

#### VIII

Beyond stirring up popular interest, it is a debatable point if bloody revolutions in Russia succeed. Certainly, sporadic nihilism has never brought permanent good to the Government or the people. It can never be the expression of the true will of the people, and its results—one or more bureaucrats less—have never

helped solve any problem; in fact, have worked quite the opposite, for invariably have they caused the clamps of reactionary administration to be applied tighter.

If one reads history only in the light of its immediate causes and effects, the revolutionary troubles of 1902-7 did bear fruit in the establishment of the Douma. Looking across the grand panorama of Russian history it appears, as was noted at the beginning of this chapter, more as a reversion to a type with which the early Slavs were well acquainted.

The purpose of a revolution is to start something in action rather than to endow it with strength to perpetuate that action. It is a clearing of the slate, a forced balancing of the books. Although quite different from reform, it is logical to expect reforms to follow on revolutions.

In Russia this is not necessarily the case. The slate is rarely cleaned, the books rarely balanced. Once popular wrath has subsided, but few are interested enough to carry on the reforms to a definite working stage. Revolution in Russia has invariably been followed by a period of reaction; not that the revolution has been broken, but the interest of the people has been dispelled. Heretofore, invariably, has the substantial framework of reform government come from above, the constructive work of liberal aristocrats.

Russian revolutions have lacked practical programs. They have also lacked a unified purpose and—what finally won the day for the French Revolution—the support of a middle class, the backing of a great urban proletariat. This proletariat Russia is only beginning to develop. The wide gulf between the nobility—



which still numbers 15 to every 1,000 of the population—and the peasantry—which bulks 80% of the whole—is gradually being bridged by a class of industrial workers and shopkeepers. Fundamentally an agricultural nation, Russia suddenly discovered in this war the necessity for industries and found, at the same time, that she possessed the nucleus of a new and vital class.

The smoke of Industry on Russia's horizon is her pillar of cloud by day. Her pillar of fire by night is that of the burning torches of progressive nations with which she has been forced into close fellowship by the war.

The darkness of the Russian people will be further dispelled by the dynamics of borrowed dollars. The situation is simple. The Russian Government will need money after the war, and she will be obliged to borrow it from France and England unless she arbitrarily wills to undo all the good that this war has done by again subjugating herself to Germany and German interests. Neither France nor England will be in a position to permit the strict reactionary interpretation so long as they are leagued with Russia against the Central Powers. Russia will have to come up to standard.

This was the choice that the Russian Government faced until March, 1917. Then suddenly, almost over-night, plans that had been formulating for months were completed and the leaders of the people struck for freedom. It is too early to say what will come out of the chaos. The Romanov dynasty sees its end and the people are beholding the liberty they have been preparing for.

The Russian people have reverted to a democracy.

## CHAPTER V

### "THIS IS THE FAITH OF THE FATHERS"

**R**EGARDING any church there are two points to note: spiritual facts and statistics.

The statistics are all the more necessary in considering a state church such as Orthodoxy. In that circumstance the Church is an economic factor, an owner of lands, temporal power and moneys. It must be looked upon, then, as a corporation.

The world boasts but one great international ecclesiastical corporation, the Church of Rome, which is not restricted by the bounds of empire nor limited to any one tongue. The Orthodox Church of Russia and the Church of England are corporations subsidiary to their respective states, and, in the main, labor only in those countries where their tongues are spoken. They are national churches with national spheres of influence. Orthodox Russians, of course, do not speak of their Church as a State Church; it is called *Gospodstvoyustchaya Tzerkov*, the Predominating Church. This is only juggling with words, however, for, from every possible viewpoint, Orthodoxy is an arm of the Government.

Orthodoxy became a corporation subsidiary to the Russian State during the reign of Peter the Great. Previous to that time it had existed as an offshoot of Byzantium. It has always been Byzantine in its forms.

The influence of the West came to Russia through the State; the influence of the East has clung to it through the activities of the Church. It is the most persistently pro-Slav force in Russia, and consequently is one of the means by which the individuality of Russia will be preserved.

Of the three ecclesiastical corporations, Orthodoxy possesses the greatest range of temporal power; the empire of the Orthodox Church is the Empire of Russia, which is one-sixth of the earth's land surface. Since it is not a missionary church, any activities outside the bounds of that empire can be interpreted only as a fulfilling of its legitimate stewardship, a shepherding of its flock in foreign parts.

Because of this immense sphere of influence, and because of its unyielding stand in matters of dogma, Orthodoxy lays claim to being the one church that will eventually lead the universe to salvation. As the antiphon in the liturgy runs, "This is the Faith of the Fathers. This is the Faith that will overcome the World."

## I

By the middle of the 17th Century the Church had developed a pronounced spirit of independence. Although it recognized the motherhood of Byzantium, the power of its prelates, growing with the power of the cities, emboldened the Church to make a stand for itself. It assumed the spiritual suzerainty of all Slavdom. "The organic vice of the old Russian Church community," says Kluchevsky,<sup>1</sup> "lay in the fact that

<sup>1</sup> *A History of Russia*. By V. O. Kluchevsky. Vol. III. Page 307. New York, 1911.

it considered itself the one true Orthodox community in the world and its conception of the Deity the exclusive regular one; that it put forward as the creator of the universe a peculiarly Russian god, who belonged to and was known to no one else; and that it elevated to the ranks of the Church Universal a purely local church."

To maintain such a position two conditions were necessary; a solidarity of belief and a uniformity of practice throughout the ecclesiastical empire. This state of affairs did not exist, however. Each section affected some variation in the rite; moreover, the ritual was anything but uniform throughout the Church.

In 1666-7 Nikon, Patriarch of Moscow, then head of the Church, ordered the ritual standardized and completed plans for a translation of the Gospels into the vernacular. Both reforms met with immediate opposition. Local usage refused to be rooted out on order. Those who crossed themselves with three fingers were not willing to concede the ritual point to those who used two. As Nikon held authority, the bulk of Orthodoxy followed the new order, but there was an appreciable body that clung to the old.

This break in the ranks of Orthodoxy was a schism rather than a heresy. In dogma the *Raskolniks*, or Old Believers, hold the same faith as the Orthodox and their churches are very much alike. They are also loyal and patriotic to the Empire, as witness many of the Cossacks who are *Raskolniks*. From the first they suffered persecution, for Orthodoxy has made every effort to drive these seceders into the fold and keep them there. In the past few years a movement for the con-

solidation of the Old Believers with Orthodoxy has been gaining ground and may, after the war, bring about the devoutly wished-for unity in Russian Christendom.

Scarcely had the schism become permanent than Peter the Great came to the throne and in 1721 introduced another element into Orthodoxy by placing the administration of the Church on a basis that would prevent it from working contrary to the State. Hitherto the prestige and power of the Patriarch of Moscow had constantly caused friction with the throne. There was a two-fold monarchy—the Tsar and the Patriarch. Peter took the power from the Patriarch and entrusted it to an administrative council, the Holy Synod, at the head of which was the Tsar's representative, a layman who held the position of chief procurator. This Synod has ever since been the directing force of religious affairs in Russia.

The Synod consists to-day of the three metropolitans of Moscow, Petrograd and Kiev, the Archbishop of the Caucasus and several other bishops. The procurator, representing the Tsar, dictates what shall be the subjects discussed by the council, and in what ways it shall function. The appointments and depositions of bishops are in the hands of the Synod, who in turn appoint and remove the parish clergy and the abbots of monasteries. Thus is the administrative system linked with the Government and the lowest parish *pope* designated as a representative of Russia's ecclesiastical empire. It, moreover, controls the disbursement of the income of the Church, which amounts to over \$50,000,000 annually. For the Church, in some ways, is richer than the State.

II

The Orthodox Church is an immensely wealthy corporation. In addition to the miles of land that it possesses, its monasteries own lucrative estates in various parts of the Empire. The Church of England in the height of its monastic glory knew no such wealth as the Russian Church knows today.

Unquestionably the time will come when the Church will have to make an accounting of its stewardship of all this material wealth. Whether it will come through force or by its own volition, it is difficult to say. Like the Government, the Church must eventually come up to standard, if it is to maintain its prestige with a people fast becoming enlightened. It is my private opinion that the Russian Church will not experience a sudden revolution either from the side of the Government or from the people. Apart from the reforms of Nikon it has never known any such break as the Reformation; in fact, the Reformation was scarcely heard of in Russia. A Protestant reform is out of the question. So far that matter is the disestablishment of the Church. The way it will come up to standard will probably be along gradual lines—evolution within its own ranks, the distribution of its lands among the people, and a more liberal interpretation of its doctrines.

The Edict of Toleration (1905) showed the extent to which Orthodoxy's ranks were "papered," and gave an indication of what will happen once liberal religious views take root in the Russian soul. Although it will be a sad day for Russia's individuality as a nation, the time will unquestionably come when either the Church will be passed by on the other side, or will have ac-

quired such new blood as to carry it on as the leader of the people.

Reform is fast growing in the Church. One of the most significant movements of recent years is that tending toward legislation which will permit a parish to elect its own pastor. At present the bishop of the diocese appoints the priest to the living and the parishioners have nothing to say in the matter. But there are hundreds of localities where the need for the right priest is felt and the desire to call a certain man to the locality is a live issue with the inhabitants. Under the existing régime the priest is, to all intents and purposes, a representative of the Ecclesiastical State. If he were chosen by the people, he would be their expression of ecclesiastical self-government.

In addition to this movement is one which also promises better things. There is a growing interest in sociological problems in the Russian villages. Heretofore the interest has come from the *intelligentsia* who went among the people; now the people themselves are being quickened to an interest in the welfare of their fellows. Collective and individual philanthropy tending toward the prevention of poverty and disease is becoming a part of the Church's interests in the small towns. The parish hall, for example, is no longer a great novelty. All this, of course, is part of that same movement for personal betterment which found expression in the *moujik's* attitude toward the vodka traffic. The difference lies in the fact that the priests are here the leaders in the movement. A very vivid and picturesque account of this movement among the clergy is found in Potapenko's novel, "A Russian Priest," the tale of the effect of the humanitarian efforts of a

young priest, Cyril Ignatievitch, in a secluded but priest-ridden parish.

### III

To interpret the Church of the present time one must understand its labors and potentialities. The potentialities consist in a complete control, under the Government, of all matters of dogma and practice. Its labors, apart from the administration of the sacraments and the upholding of the Christian faith, are along three lines, viz.: political activities, education and the Christianizing of the frontiers of the Empire.

The political activities of the Church may be defined as an effort to hedge itself with such bureaucratic support as to resist and ward off attack against its temporal power. Yet there are hosts of priests and prelates in Russia to-day who serve their consciences better than they serve their king. There has often been open sympathy with the people, and more than one priest has been unfrocked and exiled for his liberal views.

At the last counting, 83.4% of the total scholastic body in Russia attended the primary schools which, for the most part, are controlled and conducted by the Church. The curriculum consists of the three R's, domestic science for the girls and the rudiments of bee-keeping and farming for the boys, together with generous doses of religious instruction.

This control of primary education has logical reasons. Both Orthodoxy and the Roman Church hold that the foundations of faith must be laid in childhood if a man is expected to turn to it in his times of need and at death. Hence the insistence of both churches on the religious instruction of the young. The impos-



sibility of enforcing it, on the other hand, is one of the vital weaknesses of Protestantism. Eclectic religion does not "stand up" under great crises or distress. Moreover, if the Church is to endure, it must constantly be training the new race of believers. The strength of Catholicism both East and West lies in the future generation.

In the curricula of the higher schools the Church has often exercised the most arbitrary and senseless authority, dimming the light of truth with the shadow of prejudice. Professors and instructors who are inclined to disseminate irreligious or heretical ideas are closely watched and summarily punished.

The activities of the Church in education, then, are to train the coming generations of believers and to safeguard the faith as taught to the people today. There is still a third activity—the labors on the frontiers of Orthodoxy.

#### IV

A ribbon of land, in some regions fifty miles wide, in others fifty yards, threads its way from the Pacific, above the shoulder of the Hermit Kingdom, and across the backbone of Manchuria. On the fringe of the Gobi Desert, between the Mongol and Russian *vis-à-vis*, Maimatchin and Kiakhta, it narrows to a brook bed. Widening, it twists thence in and out the passes of the Altai, and, by a circuitous southern course over sun-parched steppe and forested mountain face, finally reaches the Caspian, Russia's Asiatic border.

You will see a varied lot of frontiers if you travel extensively, but rarely will you find a border that voices so forcibly the methods and ideals of a nation

as does that strip marking the edge of Muscovite lordship. Studded along it, like buttons on a lambrequin, stand little stockaded forts, each with its equipment of men and arms. From them, by day and by night, tramp stern-visaged men to patrol the intervening stretches. By day and by night their eyes are fixed on the southern horizon—Mongolia, Tibet, Afghanistan and Indiaward. Mounted and afoot, armed for action and alarm, they form a veritable picket fence of bayonets from the Pacific to the Caspian.

These soldiers who defend the farther fringe of the Tsar's kingdom constitute only the skirmishing line of a greater army. Behind the soldiers stand the priests.

Until you have seen this second army you cannot comprehend the first. Until you are convinced that Russia has assimilated and is assimilating more and more territory that she may bring "His saving faith," as she understands it, to all nations, you will not fully grasp the *raison d'être* of Russian arms. "The world policy of Russia is a gradual growth. It is the Christian ideal. The expulsion of the Turk, the conversion of the Asiatic heathen, world-wide dominion of Russian Orthodoxy, are nothing more than the realization of Christ's Kingdom on earth." Incredulous students of international politics may claim that the Slavophiles—Alexander III, Dostoevsky and their kind—are all dead, their dream an illusion forever shattered. The reigning Tsar, however, adheres to the ideals his father set up, as many of his administrative acts prove, and as is indicated by the continent-cleaving Asiatic border to-day.

Beneath the surface of the main channel of Russian endeavor to-day is rolling, silently, with irresistible,

impelling force, the Slavophil spirit. Russians look to Constantinople and the day when the Cross will shine out above St. Sophia. It is to-day the dream of the wise men at Petrograd, it is the dream of the obscure village priest that, through the Orthodox Faith, the world will be converted to Christ. And these doubters of the *Filioque* have set before themselves, as a means to attaining that end, the absorption of territory in Asia until the borders of the Russian Empire shall be contiguous to those of a Christian-civilizing power, British India.

In the '90's, when Manchuria became a complement of Eastern Siberia by the building of a railroad, an army was flung across it, ostensibly to guard the line from the depredations of native brigands. But scarcely had these soldiers become settled in their bastioned forts (you can still see them to-day) than the fiat went forth that missionaries of faiths other than the Orthodox would be excluded from Manchuria. And into Manchuria poured the Russian priests—Moscow's second line of the Church Militant.

It is obvious that Russia is determined not to step aside from the path to her "clear-purposed goal"—so forcibly symbolized by her troop-lined, priest-guarded Asiatic border—of dispelling national and racial divergencies through the erection above them of the Cross of Orthodoxy. The war may have put the movement in abeyance, but the desire is there and the dream is still cherished in the hearts of the believers.

But have these frontiersmen of Orthodoxy accomplished their purpose? The answer is found in Manchuria to-day.

At Port Arthur, shortly after Russia leased that sec-

tion, were laid the foundations for a mighty church. Men and machines dragged iron-stone monoliths and set them up on the hillside. Eighty thousand roubles (\$40,000) were sunk in the foundations alone. A fortress of the faith, as inaccessible as was Tiger's Tail on the heights above, was to be this church. Slowly from the forest of scaffolding reared the walls.

Then came war and the defeat of Kuropatkin on the Yalu. Down the peninsula streamed the Japanese army. Behind Tiger's Tail cowered the Russian fleet, while Togo lay without. The siege guns began to belch, and into that quiet pocket of the Asiatic coastline was hurled the awful thunder of war. For eleven months Japanese shells battered against the foundations of the new church, showers of bullets snipped the scaffolding, huge projectiles pierced the walls and nosed their way into the pavement where the altar was to stand.

On January 2nd, 1905, Stoessel handed his sword to Nogi; ten days later the twenty-six thousand Russian soldiers, stripped of arms, marched out from the fortress. In their midst walked the soldiers of Russia's second army, these carrying the accoutrements of their warfare—the sacred vessels, the *ikons*, the books of the liturgy.

Today all that remains of what was to have been the church are some crumbling ruins. The little slant-eyed Japanese guide, who points them out, says with pride, "No use now, there is only one Russian left in Port Arthur."

To the eastward, thirty miles over the hills, lies Darien. "Dalny" the Russians called it, and they had great plans for making the little Chinese port a mighty

commercial capital in the Far East. Broad streets were laid out, and a civic center planned, rows of substantial houses ran up, the harbor was dredged and wharves constructed. As the crowning glory, a big cathedral was erected on an eminence in the heart of town. Then came the war. With scarcely the interchange of a shot, Dalny fell into the hands of the Japanese.

The dawn of 1905 brought the Russian dream for the town to a bitter awakening. The Japanese poured in and took up the life of the city. Today Darien is booming, with trolley cars and a newspaper in English, with office buildings and an electric park, fashioned after the manner of Coney Island, which looks out over the sapphire waters of the bay. On all sides buildings are springing up. Each boat from Japan brings a fresh consignment of settlers. Few Russians remain—a handful of merchants, a score of clerks and the consul, who lives in the ugly white house to the north of the town.

Central in this bustle and growth stands the Russian cathedral. What were once its close-clipped lawns are now waist-high meadows of rank weeds. Far overhead the stay cables of the dome cross, rusted and snapped, swing languidly in the gentle breeze that blows in from the Pacific. Attempt to enter the grounds, and you find the gates chained. Huge padlocks are on each door. . . . Across the street stands the Yamato Hotel, one of those smart, up-to-date Japanese hostelrys. In its parlor each Sunday morning an Anglican pastor gathers about him the resident Britons and prays that laborers be sent forth into the harvest.

Two hundred miles north of Darien threads the rib-

bon of land that so strikingly defines the southern fringe of Russian lordship in Manchuria. There stand her soldiers. There stand her priests. Though the Treaty of Portsmouth made no such provision, Russia withdrew her spiritual forces just so soon as her soldiers were defeated.

In a word, Russia's spiritual conquests abroad depend on her victories on the field of battle.

## v

Until one has entered a Russian church he can have no conception of the profound piety of the Russian people. Nor, for that matter, can he imagine the richness of the glory of her churches and the meaning which that richness symbolizes.

Here the walls without and within are frescoed in all manner of brilliant colors. There is nothing somber about the buildings, like the little tin Bethels in which one is often obliged to worship in other lands more apparently enlightened. The municipality, the Synod or the *Zemstvo* will erect the building, but the free-will offerings of the people make it a palace—even the humblest of village churches. To the very roof beams the walls are covered with *ikons* (flat religious paintings, since the carved figure is forbidden by Orthodoxy as tending toward the graven image), many of them encrusted with jewels. Lamps and candles burn before the *ikons*, the shrines and altar during service. At the farther end of the church—which is always the eastern end—is a great screen or *ikonostas*, on which are other *ikons*. Before it hang lamps perpetually burning. Double doors, or the Royal Gates, are in the middle

and give entrance to the altar. Behind this screen the priest retires to celebrate the most sacred parts of the Divine Mysteries.<sup>1</sup>

In the air is the dry odor of stale incense, the acrid tinge of gutted candles mixed with the sweat of muddy boots and muddier humanity—the indescribable miasma of mob religion.

There is a singular democracy about the services. Rich and poor, high and lowly rub elbows, paupers, princes, gentlemen, saints, fools, demi-mondes, soldiers, *intelligentia*, merchants, old folks and young, men in

<sup>1</sup> Strictly speaking, the Orthodox church is divided into three parts: (1) The sanctuary, into which none but the clergy enter. (2) The nave, reserved for the congregation. (3) The porch, which in the ancient church was occupied by catechumens and penitents, but now is generally occupied by a table in charge of a nun where tapers and *ikon*s can be purchased.

The *ikonostas* separates the sanctuary from the nave. Three doors pierce it, two of them constituting the Royal Gates mentioned above. In the middle of the sanctuary stands the altar vested in linen and rich brocade and bearing the ciborium, which contains the Reserved Sacrament, the gospels and a cross. On the wall behind is a painting of the crucifixion with a seven-branch candlestick before it, which is lighted during service. At the celebration of the Divine Mysteries, a small cloth called the *antimins* is spread on the altar and the sacred vessels placed upon it covered with a veil.

The north side of the sanctuary is known as the Chapel of the Prothesis. There stands the table of oblations, upon which the sacred vessels are prepared for Mass. The south side of the sanctuary is the vestry. The floor of the sanctuary is raised above the level of the nave. That part of the platform immediately before the *ikonostas* is called the *solea* and is occupied by the choir; in the middle, or *ambo*, stands the deacon when he reads the Gospel.

During the service the priest and deacon wear tunics over their street cassocks and put maniples upon their wrists. The priest then places about his neck the *epitrachelion* or stole, and over that a cope called the *pheloneon*. The deacon wears an *orarion* or scarf on his left shoulder, letting it hang down on both sides save during the reading of the suffrages, when he holds it in his fingers, and during the Mass, when he binds it about his shoulders in the form of a cross.

The sacrament is concentrated in leavened bread—a point of departure from the Roman and Anglican Churches, and the wine and water are mixed in the chalice at the Table of Oblations, and not at the altar, a second point of departure. The gates of the *ikonostas* are closed during the consecration and the fracture of the Host.

rude sheepskin *kaftans* and men in the brilliant decorations of a dozen campaigns. On one side stand the women, on the other stand the men. There are no padded pews to sink into. Orthodoxy is not a comfortable religion. You stand up during the services or kneel—which is in accordance with the decree of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicea—and prostrate yourself when the time for prostration comes—profound prostration to the very floor, even though you are decrepit or obese. I have seen crippled men and women who could scarcely drag themselves up the church steps, but who were able to perform the most profound reverences when once they entered the doors. How they did it I cannot say. Russian knees may be more limber than ours. They have been using them for kneeling for many generations. Perhaps, like the amazing democracy of the service itself, it is one of those indefinable spiritual facts of Russia.

As is generally known, the music of the services is unaccompanied. Male voices alone lead the singing. There is also absent the concert atmosphere one gets in some of our aristocratic churches of America. Congregational singing has always been the practice of Orthodoxy. The service is a service of the people, and save for the few moments when he is behind the *ikonostas* for the consecration in the Mass, the priest is always in the midst of his people, the shepherd of his flock.

Confessions are made right in the open church in the sight of the entire congregation, not in the comfortable security of a confessional box. Truly, it is a religion of the people, for the people and most distinctly by the people.

During the last few years there has been a growth



in the art of preaching in Russian churches. Whereas before sermons were scarcely heard, they are now being preached in a majority of the churches. This public desire for homilies—for the practice arose through congregational requests for sermons—will unquestionably result in the better education of the clergy as a whole.

## VI

The clergy in Russia are divided into two bodies, the black or monastic, and the white or parish *popes*. Between the two is drawn a deep line of demarcation. The former comprise the executive and scholastic body of the priesthood. They live in monasteries which are endowed by the State, and although they are dedicated to the rigorous life of the counsels, they have not to face the problems of food and drink, shelter and raiment. To say that they lead an indolent life would be libel. They are the cells in which is stored the kinetic spiritual energy of the Orthodox Church. Among them have been and are many humble saints and great workers of miracles, mystics and ascetics, whose quiescent energy has strengthened the pulse of believers throughout the Empire. Their material prospects, on the whole, are that of the religious in Catholicism, except that they enjoy the possibility of being elevated to a bishopric, since it is from the black clergy alone that bishops are chosen.

The white clergy, on the other hand, are the direct contact machines through which the Orthodox Church administers its sacraments, spreads its teaching to the masses and wards off the attacks of foes. For them marriage is obligatory, and although they receive a

small stipend from the State, the problems of a living, the demands of a wife and children and the support of a home are ever present.

Since the executive power, the Holy Synod, is composed in the main of black clergy, it is the black clergy that have precedence in the eyes of the Church. The feeling between the two orders has long since passed the bounds of good-natured competition. It now resolves itself into bitter enmity, with the religious ranked higher than the seculars, and the seculars much in the position of the proverbial underdog. The questions that confront them in their dealings with one another are not how much opportunity for Christian labor shall the white clergy have and how much the black, but how much of the ecclesiastical budget can the one take without making the breach between the two still wider.

The lot of the white clergy is also rendered difficult by the fact that they are, to an extent, servants of the State. Thus, since Orthodoxy is the State religion, the Orthodox village *pope* is ostensibly charged with the supervision of the local activities and private life of his congregation. He is supposed to allay uneasiness, nip in the bud any revolutionary tendencies that may be brought to his notice, and, in some sections, he has even been known to be a member of the dreaded Third Division with the sad duty of having to report to the police the politically recalcitrant of his village. Since the alarming spread of dissent that followed on the ukase for religious freedom a few years back, the village priest has been considered not so much the shepherd of his flock, the guide in morals, the consoler in grief and the counselor in doubt, as an untiring sup-

pressor of heterodoxy, an ecclesiastical militant of the most violent order, a persecutor of the sectarian.

In addition, he has a function that in other countries has long since devolved upon the secular authorities. As a civil marriage does not exist in Russia, the contract being held valid only when consecrated by the Church and registered in the Church books, the *pope* is the authority in the local bureau of vital statistics. He is the registrar of births and marriages and deaths in Russia.

For filling this dual rôle of priest and state servant, the Government, as has been said, sees that he is given a stipend. The budget of the Holy Synod for the year 1915 showed the following item: "For town and country clergy, for missions and missionaries, 14,800,715 roubles." Seven million four hundred thousand dollars seems a large sum, yet, if it were divided equally between the rural clergy and the missionaries, the village priest's share would not exceed \$50 a year. As matters stand a huge part of that appropriation is spent for missions, the remaining sums being apportioned in the following manner: To the rector of an influential parish in a large town, 144 roubles, \$72 per annum; in a medium-sized parish, 108 roubles, \$54; and to the smaller ones, 72 roubles, \$36.

This sliding scale of stipends demonstrates the reason for the average priest's paradoxical position in the eyes of the Government. Though an indirect servant of the State, he cannot be granted a wage that will permit him to exceed in social appearance and position the local direct representatives of the Government, the captain of gendarmes and the *ispravnik*, the district chief of police. The Government knows well that the

*moujik* is swayed by ocular proof, hence the ecclesiastical must never rank above the civil. Here Church and State are at loggerheads, with the poor white clergy once more the underdog.

Beside his position in the Church and in the State is his position in society. Frankly, he has none. The fact of a man's being of the white clergy works the opposite effect that it does here in America or in Britain, where the parish clergyman is given entrée because of his cloth. The nobility in Russia look down on the village *popes*, and in the country districts the landed proprietors generally hold them lightly, except when they can be used to advantage to further their own ends.

This attitude has been brought about by the ancient caste system that used to obtain among the clergy, and by their lack of education. Until the end of the last century it was the unwritten but understood rule that no *pope's* son could enter a profession. The body ecclesiastical became a thing apart. Moreover, there were ranks in the white clergy that no one dared transgress. No son could hold an office higher than his father held—a *pope's* son had to become a *pope*, and a vicar's a vicar. The office was hereditary, and in some villages the *pope's* family held the living for generations. This system of castes has been dissolved by permitting *popes'* sons to enter the services of the State, with the result that now on university staffs and in regimental messes can be found innumerable sons of the rural clergy.

Time was when the educational requirements for the *pope* were absurdly insignificant. The knowledge of how to read and write and the learning of a few psalms

by heart was about all that his examiners required of him. This condition, too, has changed, and now the level of education among the village clergy is much higher, and is being raised every year.

Public opinion formed through the ages does not change so quickly, however, and for some time to come the village *pope* must suffer the slights from society that he once deserved because of his professional restrictions and his ignorance.

The factor weighing heaviest in the balance of the *pope's* private life is the obligatory marriage. In the few weeks intervening between his graduation and his appointment to a living he must find a wife. She is invariably chosen from among the daughters of the clergy. As the bishop is *ex officio* guardian to all priests' children, he generally has a list of marriageable girls on hand to offer the young candidate. Perhaps the seminarist may never have seen the girl, perhaps he may be in love with another, yet he finds it politic to humor the bishop's whim and marry the girl chosen.

The girl's side of the problem is even more difficult. She is obliged to bring to her fiancé a dowry—a sum of money, wool and silk clothes, tea and table service and furniture. How the poor village priest manages to scrape together such an expensive dot, no one knows.

So in this way it has come about that a *pope* marries a *pope's* daughter. Should the young priest die, the support of the children devolves upon the bishop. Should they be very young, they are sent off to a home. If one of the children is a girl not yet of marriageable age, the bishop permits her to live on with her mother until she is old enough to marry a graduating seminarist. The living meanwhile may be left vacant.

The young priest who has to marry under these circumstances is to be pitied; he has not alone poverty to face and a round of exacting duties, but he must live with his mother-in-law!

From the foregoing it must not be thought that happy marriages among the clergy are rare. In fact, most of them are happily married and their home life is the one bright spot in the village.

Having acquired his wife and his appointment, the young priest settles down in his living. The church has been erected by the town, so that in most cases the new pastor has little of the material fabric of the church to worry about. It is to the *moujiks* that he must look for his home. According to the custom, this is provided by the congregation; and since it is a costly item, the new incumbent finds it difficult at times to persuade his people to furnish him with a fit dwelling place. Once the wife, the living, and the house problems are settled, what prospect lies before the young priest?

In the ecclesiastical realm there are the church services, with perhaps a chapel or two to attend. He must tramp or ride this circuit, reading services, attending to the spiritual wants of his flock. If there is a school in the village, he takes a class in religious instruction; if there is no school, the children come to his house. This house, in addition, must always be ready for the welcoming of officials, of visitors and of strangers who may not care to put up at the village inn.

The *pope's* material prospects are dependent on the charity of his people and the bounty of the crops, together with the \$38 he received from the State. In his circuit of the parish he generally collects fees in

kind—a measure of meal, a piece of handmade linen, a loaf of bread, a bunch of radishes. Often, however, the sodden peasant would simply set out the vodka bottle and tell the pastor to help himself. Before the war the pastor did help himself—with lamentable results.

The drunkenness of the village clergy is a pet theme of anti-Russian polemicists. It is true that drink at one time had such a hold on the poorer white clergy that the Holy Synod was obliged to include in the questions on a *pope's* service list: "To what extent does he indulge in intoxicating liquors?" It was also true that the habit was forced upon him by circumstances. He hated vodka, he knew its damnable results—but what could he do? He preached against it, but at the danger of cutting off his own bread and butter. Fortunate for him has been this vodka prohibition!

What the *moujik* thinks of his pastor depends, of course, on both the *moujik* and the pastor, and it may be said in justice to both that the priest is held in high regard. The thinking peasant has very clear ideas of what constitutes ethical goodness and what elements go to make up a leader of men. "The type of saint as conceived by our peasant," says Uspensky, "is not that of an anchorite timidly secluded from the world lest some part of the treasure he is accumulating in Heaven might get damaged. Our popular saint is the man of the *Mir*, a man of practical piety, a teacher and a benefactor of the people."

The picture above may seem very dark, but there are bright sides to the lowly priest's life and many a compensation. There are years of abundant harvest; there

are the love and care of wife and children; there are faithful folk and true in the congregation; there are humble saints among those shaggy, obstinate *moujiks* that must bring cheer to his heart.

There is a divine compensation that comes to these humble workers in Orthodoxy's spiritual fields. It is not merely the silver lining in the priest's dark cloud when he dreams of promotion; it is a subtler and more potent urge that is vouchsafed him. It is the true *élan vital* that makes of the humblest, most despised cleric a superman of the Levites, a priest after the order of Melchisedec. The world can deny him enough food and drink, but it cannot take from him the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The wrangles of Church and State and the neglect of his congregation may make his house a mean place, but in no measure can it deprive him of the divine grace that makes his heart its home.

It is when the *pope* is before the altar that the compensation comes. Like a contact point on an electric machine that sparks and flames as the power surges through it, he stands with hands uplifted that reach Heaven. At that moment he is elevated to divine estate. The golden vestments on him, the gold about on all sides, the enclouding incense and the glory of a hundred lighted tapers lift him up to realms above poverty and loneliness and scorn.

Shaggy-bearded, shaggy-locked, burdened with a hundred responsibilities—on the shoulders of these village priests the strength of Orthodoxy is laid. Some day the State may slip its support from beneath the Church; but in that hour Orthodoxy will stand firm because of these humble village priests.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE MOUJIK'S RELIGION

**T**HE war has driven the world home to the foot of the Cross.

Of recent years we have concerned ourselves with living, with creating religions of living happily. We have had our philosophy strongly colored by the Pollyanna spirit. Suffering was denied, sorrow was scorned, death defied. We were so engrossed in teaching men how to live happily that we completely neglected to teach them how to die happily.

Suddenly this fool's paradise is plunged into war. Rank on rank of men fall before the murderous fire. By thousands they die on blood-washed fields, in hospitals, on the seas. Famine and want and disease scourge the land. The weight of suffering is thrown on the shoulders of the world.

Hitherto we have been saying that these things were not possible. Now we know that they are not only very possible but very true. Hitherto we have looked on death with bland unconcern. Now we consider it an atonement, whereby men may wash out the evil of their lives, a triumph, the least of the sacrifices men can make for an ideal.

We have valued life too much and death too little. Now must we learn the grim necessity of teaching men how to die.

The nearer one approaches the East, the less he finds life valued, and the more is death appreciated. In Russia, that mingled country of the East and West, Life is only a path to the gateway of Death. Russia has always understood suffering and been acquainted with grief. The *moujik's* Christ was a cripple; you can see His crutch in the third crooked arm of the Russian cross. The *moujik* holds that if you would follow in His footsteps, you must bear His cross in the *podvig*, the suffering that atones. As the poem runs at the bottom of a Russian war picture,

The *podvig* is in battle,  
The *podvig* is in struggle,  
The highest *podvig* is in patience,  
Love and prayer.<sup>1</sup>

So then, when the spear of war pierces the *moujik's* side, he understands it as few men can. To him the foot of the Cross is his eventual home. The way there lies through the lights and shadows of his motley religion.

## I

Beside my inkpot lies a small bronze Maltese cross. On one face is stamped a wheel, a pair of wings and some cryptic capitals; on the reverse, the name of a bicycle maker of Miami, Ohio. This cross was cut from the neck of a Russian soldier who died in the trenches.

How such an advertising bauble got from Miami, Ohio, to shell-scarred No Man's Land, I cannot say.

<sup>1</sup>I have availed myself of this translation from an article by Stephen Graham in *Country Life* for October 14th, 1916.

A fictioner might weave a romance about it. All I know is that he was a shaggy-haired youth, a peasant, and that the cross was upon him.

Frankly, the fact of his being a youth detracts somewhat from the reality the presence of the cross might have had. Had he been a man of middle age or one approaching old age, I should feel differently about it, because he would have felt differently about it. To such a man the cross would have meant something very vital in his everyday life, for by that time he would have begun his pilgrimage.

Every Russian child, at baptism, has a cross or an *ikon* placed about his neck, and there it remains until death. Yet for the first half of life the symbol represents scarcely anything to him other than the meaning which sentiment attaches.

Like youths the world over, his head is too full of play for churchly and religious things. When he enters manhood there are the stern problems of wrenching a meager fare from the soil, problems that grow heavier as the years and family increase. Moreover, the peasant has neither the leisure nor the habit of mind to fit him for abstract speculation. For a number of years, then, he leads a life in which religion is quite the least important element.

By this it must not be supposed that the outward signs of devoutness are absent or that fervor is at all lacking. The young *moujik's* piety leaves much to be desired; yet, if you were to judge him by external things—by the reverence with which he mentions the Sacred Name or the ostentatious manner of his worship in church—you would set the peasant lad down as the most fervid devotee.

Russian students are divided on this question of the reality or non-reality of the peasant's religion. The Slavophiles and the disciples of Tolstoy make him a romantically sacrosanct figure; the opposite school, of whom the most prominent representative is the historian N. Kostomiarov, claims that the modern Orthodox peasants are at much the same pass to-day as were their forefathers, the Muscovites, of the 17th Century, who were "remarkable for a state of such complete religious indifference as to be without parallel in the annals of Christian nations."

The difficulty in accepting wholly either one of these opinions is that neither is applicable to the entirety of the peasant's life. In youth and manhood he is a loose-end soul. In old age, he is quite another person. Should you chance to speak to a village *pope* on the lax morals of his young men, he will shrug a shoulder and utter that characteristic "*Niechevo*"—What does it matter? Knowing the Russian soul, he rests assured that when age comes on, these Godless sons will turn to the church for strength and consolation.

Thus, up to a certain point in life, the peasant's mind is set not on things above, but on the bread and butter, or, more precisely, the bread and vodka side of life. Then of a sudden, stirred by repentance, by illness, by bereavement, by loneliness, or more commonly by the quickening of the quiescent fervor that is in the blood of every Slav, he looks beyond mundane things and centers his religion on the farther side of the grave. Work and play and drink alike become abominations to him. A restlessness creeps over his spirit. He wants to be on his way. The desire to "go to Jerusalem" leaps like a flame before him. By

the very act of wishing to go, he believes he has already begun the journey.

The phenomenon of the pilgrimage can be witnessed in Russia as nowhere else to-day. Along the city streets, down country roads, across the desolate steppes, you meet the pilgrims in ones, in twos, in threes, sometimes in hosts. They are invariably gray-haired. Many are crippled. Neither poverty nor physical weakness, however, seems to resist the divine potentialities that this desire arouses in them. They may be journeying to Moscow, to Mt. Athos, to Kiev, or even to Jerusalem itself. Whatever the destination, the pilgrimage is the crowning act of the peasant's faith, just as the center of that faith is on the other side of the grave.

To the thousands that actually do go on pilgrimages, there are tens of thousands who are pilgrimaging, though they never leave their dooryards. Often in traveling through the country you will put up at a peasant's hut and be told, somewhat to your embarrassment, that the grandfather of the household is very ill. He lies on a heap of dirty bed-linen off in one corner, and no one pays much attention to him. Investigation will prove him, like as not, to be a perfectly healthy specimen of rugged old age with actually nothing the matter with him. Try as you may, no amount of persuasion or threats will rouse the old fellow from his bed. And that, it seems, is the way with the Russian peasant. When he falls sick he knows beyond the shadow of a doubt he is going to die. Perhaps he may recover, but the lesson has been too real to him; and while his body is simply taking a rest cure, his spirit has turned its back upon this world and set

its feet upon the road that leads up to the Spiritual City.<sup>1</sup> Henceforth he will do no work save to prepare for death.

Dying prepared is the one thing that the *moujik* has reduced, if I might use the parlance of the day, to a fine art. He has a wholesome fear of dying suddenly, lest he be without absolution. He has a wholesome fear of dying without material preparations lest he be buried in the shroud intended for another. So soon as he thinks he is going to die, he sets about making his shroud. It is sewed of a number of pieces of linen cut in a certain fashion. A wooden cross for the neck is carved, and that and the shroud are bundled together. Should the peasant go on a pilgrimage, he takes these with him.

When he dies, women prepare his body for burial, dressing it in the shroud and placing the wooden cross about the neck. Candles are set around the coffin, and in their light nuns of the neighborhood read the Psalms until the time for interment. Then the church sends a richly embroidered pall to put over the coffin, for though it is nowhere written in the rubrics, the peasants believe that at death each man becomes a priest.

Thus far, with few exceptions, the faith of the *moujik* may appear to differ but little from faith the world over. The idea of death rarely appeals to a youth, and the average man, busy with his duties, has little time to think upon it. One usually associates thoughts of death with old age.

The point wherein the *moujik* differs from every other peasant is the fact that this peculiar attraction of death is the foundation and superstructure and capstone of his faith. Speak to him of the pre-crucifixion

life of the Lord, and he is not interested. The teachings, the parables, the miracles, the daily life of the Master as He moved among men, as He journeyed from place to place with His disciples—these things the peasant cares little for. But once you begin to talk of those few days following the Resurrection, those appearances and disappearances, those words whispered here and there upon the road by the Stranger—then the Russian peasant begins to take interest. He cannot understand the radiant human face of Christ, but he can understand the pale face of the dead Christ in Mary's lap. The same is true of his attitude toward the saints. With few exceptions, a dead saint attracts him far more than a live one.

Should you judge the faith of the *moujik* in the terms of the West, you find yourself utterly at sea. We view life through the eyes of life, the Russian views life through the eyes of death. To him "Life is the night, Death the rising of the sun."

There are several reasons to which might be attributed the *moujik's* uncanny feeling about death. It might be explained by analyzing his dual nature: the element of the East with all its detachment from life and its leaning toward a purely mystical conception of the world; and the Aryan element of the West, which centers its religion in life, which loves the flesh, which believes in the reality of the world with all its victories over the forces of Nature and its dreams of evolution, progress, and development. The West teaches the intense joyousness of Life; the East the joyousness of Death.

Moreover, the peasant has a tendency toward extremes. He is as impatient and impetuous as a child.

He cannot grasp the infinite patience and endless labors by which a race of serfs rises to a high plane of civilization. He does not understand evolution. Under his skin he is an extremist, a revolutionist. When he petitions his government, he demands the seizure and equal distribution of all State lands and private properties; when he drinks, he gets drunk; when he eats, he gorges; when he believes the end of life to be approaching, he cannot go on with the day's toil and meet death while he labors, but he must begin to die from the moment the thought of death occurs to him. And with all the mystic, somber and obscure fervor of the East, he sets about making his shroud and carving his cross and stumbling on his pilgrimage.

In addition to these two—the feeling of the East toward death and the tendency toward extremes—there is still a third reason why death means a joyous thing to the *moujik*. He is in reality glad to die, because it has been so very hard to live. Little wonder that the Christ of the wounded hands and feet should have such an appeal to the peasant whose hands and feet also have been wounded! Little wonder that for him Death is the gateway to Life!

## II

All dead saints to the *moujik* are very much alive. And behind this is a story other than the explanation of his interest in death.

We of the West look upon a religious object as a symbol; what reverence we pay it, we pay to the thing the symbol represents. With the Russian peasant this is quite different. His *ikons* and saints and ceremonies



lose their signification as means to an end and become, as in the East, idols and ends in themselves. "In the eyes of the people," says Stepniak, "the *ikon* is a living thing; the very body of the saint, whose spirit dwells in it as a man's spirit inhabits his corporeal frame. They believe that the *ikon* feels pain and pleasure, resents insults, and is gratified by kind treatment, just as a living being would be."

These assertions, no doubt, will meet with denials from those who know the dogmatic side alone of the Orthodox Church. However, after being with the peasant in European Russia, traveling with him on his emigrant train to Siberia, and living elbow to elbow with him in far-away villages of the Russian East, the consensus of my observations is that, at heart, his religion is idolatrous and pagan when viewed according to strict Western standards.

To consider the Byzantine form of Christianity, as found to-day in Russia, apart from its distinctly Eastern and pagan elements, were mere folly. The advantage of its theology is that it is elastic enough to cover all states and elements of faith. The Orthodox Church still works side by side with pagan rites that once constituted the body of the primitive Slav religion. It has gathered up many of the old ways, to be sure, but vestiges of others exist. In the church itself the bewildering color of both architecture and ceremonial, the secretive nature lent the Mass by the intervention between the priest and the people of the *ikonostas*, the multitude of saints lesser and great, these can be defined as none other than Orthodoxy's Oriental elements manifesting themselves. Especially is this true when

their parallels are found just the other side of the Urals.

St. Nicholas, the most popular of Russian saints, is also a deity among the heathen aborigines of Siberia. St. Vlas, the protector of flocks and herds, is worshiped by pagan members of the Empire as Volas. The comparison could be carried down the entire hagiography with surprising results.

Though Russia is generally reputed to be the most religious country in the world, it is undeniable that the bulk of the population, which is peasant, has only the faintest conception of the framework upon which is based the religion to which it officially belongs. The peasant who can satisfactorily and intelligently give an explanation of the articles of his creed is a rare exception. He will relate all sorts of legends and utter all manner of superstitions, but in the last analysis he knows more about the pagan customs that are his than about the Christian faith he nominally embraces. The fundamental ideas of the Christian theological system seems either to be misunderstood by the peasant, or to be lost under the predominance of pagan influences. One does not wonder at the Muscovite's inability to grasp the abstruse theology of the Divine Procession, Orthodoxy's creedal point of divergence from the West; but it is surprising to see, for example, how the peasant mind conceives the relation between God the Father, and God the Son. It is akin to an earthly relationship of father and son. They are two totally distinct persons. God the Son is held in great sympathy as the friend of the common people and the enemy of the rich, perhaps not so much a living personality warring against the foes of the down-

trodden *moujik*, as he is conceived to be a lifeless, shadowy figure or power, a nemesis, a *deus ex machina* that appears at crucial moments in a story to solve knotty problems or give utterance to the popular view of things. God the Father, on the other hand, is a vague figure, usually considered a task-master and generally reputed to be unkind. In legends He invariably tries to baffle the divine ordinances and defend men from death as long as He can.

The Devil is held in genial attitude of toleration. Of course, he is a thoroughly bad person who drives the trade of dragging people down to Hell; but since that is his business and he sticks to it faithfully, he should in no wise be despised. On the whole, the Devil is accepted with forbearance and kindliness. In one legend, that of "Noe the Godly," his Satanic Majesty is represented as the junior brother of God and fellow-worker in the creation of the universe. He is not the angel before the fall, as we hold him, but even at the time of the Creation a bad person, a sort of foil to God.

The fabric of the *moujik's* conception of Heaven and Hell is so shot with apocryphal ideas directly traceable to pagan beliefs that the design is almost obscured. Just as on Olympus the gods wrangled among themselves and were unscrupulous to gain their ends, so the saints are pictured in the *moujik's* mind. In fact, so complete is the fusion of pagan and Christian elements in his beliefs that to the observer it will be a moot point whether Orthodoxy has succeeded in transforming pure paganism into Christianity, or Christianity in the hands of the *moujik* has gradually been transformed into pure paganism.

Both the Government and the Church in Russia have striven to stamp out pagan worship. The publication of pagan legends for the masses has been censored and by redoubled missionary activity the Church is attempting to do away with many practices that are common among rural folk.

Numberless customs still exist, nevertheless. The sowing and reaping of crops is regulated not by seasons and climates, but by the almanac of saints' days and by lucky hours. Thus wheat will not germinate, they say, if planted at Easter, and cabbages to be any good at all must be set out on Maundy Thursday. There are also many days on which the peasant considers it unlucky to work; especially is this true of Easter week. Instead of laboring at this season, he used to go on a prolonged drinking bout, and the last state of that man and his fields was worse than the first.

The *moujik's* respect for the native fays and sprites is very poetic, though explicable because his life is lived close to Nature. Fishermen offer small propitiatory sacrifices to keep the house fairies or *domovoi* in a contented frame of mind. The *roussalki*, by the way, are very pale and very beautiful nymphs who appear by moonlight in rivers and lakes and streams. Clothed in but a crown of flowers, they stroll about singing in choirs, or rest upon the bank to comb their long tresses. To be precise, they are neither fairies nor witches, but the souls of the little children who have died unbaptized. The *domovoi*, or house fairies, are a very moodish lot. You must not mention their names after twilight, and if you ill-treat them they will make sleep impossible. If your house is blessed with good *domovoi* who love you and your children, they will do many

things for you—they will take care of the horses, watch over your daughter, see that she gets a good suitor, and will never let you or yours know starvation.

The *znakhhar*, or witch doctor, is a regular institution in many villages, and though he apparently works in direct antagonism to the local priest, he is held in much fear. By means of spells and incantations, this charlatan claims to cure all sorts of ills.

I discovered that, in the Salaiyeer Mountains, which lie two hundred miles south from the Trans-Siberian Railway in Western Siberia, when the cattle or horses of a peasant farmer fall sick, he does not send for the veterinary, but for the local *shaman*, or medicine man of the Kalmucks, who comes, and with a drum drives away the evil spirits. Now in that country there is a veterinary provided by the local government, and his services can be had for almost nothing, but the peasant seems to believe that the heathen medicine man effects the cure with more dispatch and efficiency.

### III

The influence of the East manifests itself in the soul of the *moujik* in still another fashion—the nature of his sects. The first split in Orthodoxy came in the time of Nikon, in the 17th Century, and was due mainly to disputes over the translation of the Scriptures and, as we have seen, an attempt to standardize the ritual. Behind this schism, however, there was a distinct mystical leaning on the part of those who left the body of the church. The mystical leaning is that which underlies all people whose formalism

is inborn as is the Russian's. He has the formalism of the East, and its mysticism as well.

The later sectarians, the Doukoboors and Mullakons and the Strlyzic, and the host of other dissenting bodies that have appeared in Russia from time to time, have also invariably had for their point of divergence some conception of God and man's relation to Him that cannot be defined in terms other than those of pure mysticism.

Perhaps one of the most astounding moments in the history of Orthodoxy came upon the promulgation of the Edict of the Toleration in 1905.<sup>1</sup> To its amazement the Church found that many of its nominal members had long since embraced doctrines other than those taught by the Church, though for safety's sake they had been professing Orthodoxy. And thus, just as in the East religion is divided and subdivided into a multitude of small mystical sects, so in Russia today the divisions grow with alarming rapidity.

The Raskolniks, or dissenters, whose numbers, by the way, for the entire empire, total much over two millions, fall into two classes: the *Popovshchina*, those who permit the ministrations of priests; and the *Bezpopovshchina*, those who, repudiating sacerdotalism, choose "elders" to conduct their services.

Of the score-odd heretical sects in Russia, the Mullakons are by far the most sane, and incidentally the most interesting to study. They do not run to the

<sup>1</sup>The report of the chief procurator of the Holy Synod in 1910 showed that several hundred thousand people nominally Orthodox before had joined other churches—Catholic, Mohammedan and Protestant mainly. The growth of Protestantism in Russia has been very great in the past decade. There is something about the long exhortations, the singing of sentimental hymns and the fiery sermons of Protestantism that appeals to the *moujik*. He likes to be stirred.

unbalanced vagaries of their closely-related sect, the Doukoboors, or the hideous self-immolation of the Philippovsti, or the loathsome promiscuousness of the Byeguni, or the avowed silence of the Molchalyniki, or the unspeakable practices of the Khlistovstchina. Their name, meaning "the milk drinkers," marks one of their points of departure from the Orthodox faith; they drink milk on fast days when such indulgence is forbidden. They are more than Protestants; they boast the additional distinctive virtue of being Puritans, in fact, very rigorous Puritans. They are Protestants in that they protest against what they believe to be the errors of dogma and ritual in the Orthodox Church; Puritans in that their lives are distinctly ascetic, in contradistinction to the lives of many of the Orthodox peasantry of Russia.

Political reaction first brought the Mullakons to notice. In 1765 a band of them who had refused to bear arms and pay their taxes were arrested. Since then they have been an appreciable factor in Russian life, though they no longer refuse to serve their term in the army or contribute to the revenues. Obscurity veils their origin. A possible precursor, Dmitri Tveratinov, was persecuted in 1714 for preaching Calvinism, but the supposition is that the beginnings of the sect are to be traced directly to the teachings of Luther, the seeds of the Reformation having been brought to Russia by those foreigners who, during the reign of Peter the Great, poured in hosts across the western frontier. From time to time, groups of Mullakons have been persecuted and banished. The Church has made efforts to bring them into the fold, always without success. Only recently the Holy Synod authorized

a missionary campaign to the Mullakons of Siberia. Now and again the world hears of them—a chance item of news that strays over the newspaper cables; Tolstoy acknowledged his indebtedness to their teachings; but perhaps the oddest reference, and one which serves also as an excellent epitome, was that made by a Quaker writer in 1818, who spoke of the Mullakons as the “Pennsylvanians of Moscovy.” To-day the Caucasus, tracts of Little Russia and Amurland to the eastward of Lake Baikal in Siberia, are their habitat. In Amurland, where settle many immigrants from Little Russia, they constitute half the population.

The inroad of Islam, especially in Western Siberia, is another significant religious movement. Moslem traders coming up out of Turkestan or going eastward on the Trans-Siberian, join their efforts to the proselyting by the Tartars already in Siberia. Against them the Church is sending missionaries with a view to stemming the tide.

## IV

It is interesting to note, apropos of these sects, how illogical are the religious prejudices of the Orthodox Russian. He will start a *pogrom* and commit atrocities on the Jews, but it will never occur to him to voice even the slightest protest against his Mohammedan neighbor, the Tartar, or to pillage the local mosque. In fact, at Ufa a Moslem college flourishes. He will scorn and insult his sectarian fellow-townsmen, but the Mongols and Booriats and Kalmucks, who worship the spirits of mountains and old trees and tumbling rivers, he will take to his arms.

The reason is clear enough. The rise of heretical



sects in Russia has invariably been due not so much to religious revolt as to some political or economic reaction. Now the Moslem and the Booriat are good traders—trusting, veracious and above board in their business transactions. What more could a Russian ask? But the Jew and the sectarian, many Russians assert, are covertly shrewd, perfidious and rascally. Why shouldn't the Orthodox cast their heresy in their teeth?

## v

The proof of the reality of any religion—pagan, Protestant, Orthodox or Catholic—is the way it acts under the stress of suffering and defeat. Its test is the test of the Resurrection—the ability to rise again after inglorious catastrophe and annihilation.

Although the Russian Church has been allied with the powers that exploited and abused the masses, the faith of the Orthodox *moujik* has remained unshaken. Among the *intelligentsia*, who were affected by Western modes of thinking, political defeat bred mental sulkeness and decadence, but after the troublous times of 1905 the *moujik* went on believing just as he did before.

There may be misbelief among the Russian peasantry, but there is no unbelief. The atheist is a *rara avis* and sterile agnosticism unknown. This is a spiritual fact that cannot be gainsaid—the Orthodox faith helps the *moujik* bear his lot in life. It gives him a basis for being.

On the other hand, such unwavering devotion may be set down to habit rather than to the divine power of the Orthodox religion. While I hold no brief for

Orthodoxy, I believe that religious habit is as justifiable and as effectual as physiological habit. There is just as much reason for a man crossing himself out of habit as there is for his breathing out of habit. When practice becomes subconscious to that degree, it is a very real part of his life. Once we grant the reality of the religious fact—the dependence of the human soul on a Supreme Being—we presuppose a relation that is as subconscious and habitual, but, nevertheless, as necessary as the co-relation of lung tissue and air.

The Puritan may picture his God as a fearsome person dwelling a great distance off, and the *moujik* may consider Him a thoroughly companionable sort of fellow at his elbow. Who can say which conception requires the more thought? The Puritan refuses to worship with his body and the *moujik* refuses to worship without it; and the Puritan seems to enjoy himself censoring the ballet and music that the *moujik's* body-religion fortunately brought into being for the world's delectation.

At this point the question very naturally arises: But while Orthodoxy teaches the peasant how to bear with his lot and to meet death face-fronted, does it teach him how to live—teach him not to pick and steal, not to lie and slander and speak evil?

Unquestionably it does. Religion without some ethics will not last a generation, and Orthodoxy has lasted for seven centuries. The Hell of the Orthodox dogma is all too real and the Heaven all too beautiful to permit a universal laxness on such everyday matters of living. In viewing this, as in examining any religious faiths, we are obliged to remember that evil

and good are matters of relative value. What is wrong for John Smith of Erie, Pa., may be perfectly legitimate for Ivan Ivanovitch of Ekaterinburg. Moreover, one must not lose sight of the two different conceptions of religion held by East and West.

We of the West insist that religion and ethics must be one and inseparable. This is not the rule of the East, nor can we expect to find it in the Russian maelstrom of East and West. The East makes a distinction between the two—and lives accordingly. The West makes no distinction in theory, but separates them as far as the poles in the practices of everyday life.

The great difficulty in finding a clear definition for the *moujik's* religion lies in the fact that it is not wholly Eastern nor wholly Western, that it is not altogether pagan nor altogether Christian. It is a mingling of religion and ethics—with religion and dogma predominant.

Yet to me there is something distinctly tangible and worth while about the *moujik's* religion. It is "o' the very stuff of life and self of self." Call it idolatrous, call it casually habitual, call it what you will—it is the foundation of his life, he feeds on it, leans on it, and when the end comes it helps him die happy and confident.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE RUSSIAN AS A BUSINESS MAN

**U**NTIL the war started, the best Russian business men were Germans. For the extraordinary fact about the Russian as a business man is that he is such a poor business man—judging him by American standards of business efficiency. The concept of public service which is fast becoming the foundation of all our commerce and industry is a lesson the average Russian merchant has still to learn. The principles of business coöperation, and sometimes even of personal business honesty, have still to be mastered. In this, as in so many other phases, Russia is a gauche adolescent.

#### I

Much has been written of late about Russian credits and commercial hands across the seas. America, rich in gold and efficient in business methods at home, seeks new markets in the great Slav Empire. This is as it should be. Russia is an importing nation rather than an exporting; she needs our wares and we need her trade. Doubtless the day will come when the United States and Russia will be the two great commercial nations of the world. Meantime, there are many lessons for both peoples to learn and great improvements to be made on either side.

While every effort will be made by Berlin and by London to capture Russian credits and Russian markets after the war, the fact remains that Russia is old enough now to carry her own dinner pail, and that America can both furnish the pail and put something into it. The vast resources of her arable lands—her wheat lands in European Russia alone are larger than the American fields—will always keep her an agricultural country, yet the growth of her industries, the growth of her mining, petroleum and railway projects has already made her a power in industry worthy of American consideration.

To the average American merchant intent on finding a new market for his wares, these questions generally arise:

“Can I sell him anything?”

“How good pay is he?”

“What can he sell me?”

This simple analysis has formed the basis of American commerce abroad. Because it does not fully cover the situation, our markets in foreign parts are not as secure as they might be. Time and again American exporters find themselves beaten out and undersold by foreign firms. Especially is this true in South America. We have not gone much beyond asking ourselves in a self-admiring sort of way, “Well, I wonder what I can get the South American to buy?”

The German has done it much better. He has sent agents out to study the requirements of the markets. The merchant in Berlin has a fairly clear notion of the sort of people who are buying his wares in South America, what the consignees are like, what the journey from Hamburg to Rio de Janeiro requires of a

package and in what shape the native merchant wants to receive his consignment. With all our boasted industrial efficiency, Americans have even failed to learn how to wrap packages so that they will ship safely to South America! Our wares are poorly crated and marked in English—which not one native in a thousand understands. And so the German trader, whose base of supplies is 11,000 miles away, wins in the competition with the American exporter who has to send his goods only a scant 6,000 miles.

I have dwelt at some length on the South American situation because it finds its parallel in Russia. On the wharves at Archangel are thousands of crates from America, scores of them stenciled in red, "This Side Up," "Glass," "Use No Hooks," "Handle With Care." Imagine the bewilderment of the *moujik* longshoresman at such cabalistic signs!<sup>1</sup> He hasn't the slightest notion what they are all about, so he wields his hook valiantly and tumbles the cases upside down, and laughs at the funny tinkle the crates make inside. And the Russian merchant, in turn, wonders what sort of fool the American merchant must be that he sends him broken goods!

In doing business with Russia the American exporter's first problem should not be about what he can persuade the Russian to buy, but "What is the Russian merchant like?" "What sort of people does he sell to?" "What are the needs of those people individually and collectively?"

The best way to settle such questions is for the mer-

<sup>1</sup>In 1916 the Russian Government transported several thousands of Buriats from Central Asia to act as longshoresmen on the wharves at Archangel. Few of them can speak Russian, much less read it—which adds to the humor of this situation.

chant to go to Russia himself and find out. Certainly he will not want for a hearty welcome; no people under the sun are more hospitable than the Russ. In lieu of that he can send a representative. American colleges each year graduate scores of men who can speak French and German, bright, brisk young lads with an eye to business who, after a year or so studying the home plant and its output, could be sent to Russia to scout around for the answer to these questions. Or, if that is not feasible, the manufacturer can avail himself of our Consular Trade Reports, which are the most up-to-date and efficient of all the nations—even the British concede this. Finally, the American exporter may find it to his interest to communicate with the American-Russian Chamber of Commerce in New York, which was organized in 1916 for the purpose of encouraging and promoting a closer union in industry, commerce and finance, and "to create bonds of mutual sympathy between the two great nations—Russia and the United States." Its motto is, "To be close to Russia means first of all to know, to understand Russia."

Just what form the actual exporting might take can best be learned from the experience of other nations. The Germans, who know more about Russian trade than any other people, have given up the idea of branch houses as impractical. The English have about reached the same conclusion. Instead, they have lately been developing the market through travelers who carry large assortments of samples, quote prices F.O.B. a Russian port and, if necessary, include the price of duty and local delivery in their estimate of the cost. The American merchant, once he has learned

the needs of the market, had best employ a Russian selling agent or avail himself of the facilities of an exporting firm. For the convenience of local dealers, he should see to it that prices, sizes, weights, etc., are worked out in Russian figures and that packages are marked so that the native can read them.

In the course of her development in the next few decades Russia will require many kinds of articles, but the two that America is best fitted to furnish are good machinery and high-class fabrics. We have already made a name for American machinery in Russia but we have still to create a demand for such luxuries as fine silk underwear and stockings and the higher grades of woolen articles. We cannot compete with the low-priced labor of Japan and Germany and Russia itself in furnishing a cheap line of these goods. Our best opportunity is to create a market for American luxuries. When a woman buys perfume in Russia she asks for French perfume, despite the fact that some very fine scents are made in Moscow. There is no reason why, with proper development of the market, that same woman should not habitually ask for American silk underwear and silk stockings and fine woollens.

## II

In dealing with Russian merchants, Americans must remember that there are methods and concepts of business widely differing from his own. The Russian merchant has still much of the East in his veins. He is accustomed to the interminably slow methods of the East, to haggling, to looking for his own little back-sheesh, to enjoying the advantages of long credits, and



to having a thoroughly good time. Moreover, this merchant has to deal with hosts of people who neither read nor write and to whom ocular proof is the only advertisement.

Enter a Russian bank, for example. The business is usually conducted on the second floor, as second-story men have not become so expert in Russia as here. At the front door stands a soldier in uniform, a saber at his side and a bayoneted gun over his shoulder. You mount the stairs. Another soldier, armed to the teeth, stands on the landing. You step on to the banking floor. A third soldier eyes you from the corner. You have a notion that you've blundered into a barracks by mistake. You are quite wrong. The soldiers are there to assure the people that their funds are being safely guarded. It is another phase of the ocular proof that the native requires.

You step up to the cash window and present your checks. The teller is playing with an abacus—our electric-run counting machines are practically unknown in Russian banks. Courteously, although a bit languidly, he receives your papers and asks you to wait. You retire to a corner. Fifteen minutes pass, twenty, half an hour. You step up to the window to see what action you can get. The teller and the other clerks are drinking tea and nibbling snacks of luncheon. You go back to your seat wondering what it is all about.

The fact is that the Russian banker, merchant, machinist, day laborer—all classes, in fact—stop at eleven and four for tea. To drink unboiled water in Russia is to fly in the face of Providence, so tea is regularly served out twice a day and many times in between.

This, of course, halts the wheels of industry and banking, but you must accustom yourself to it.

Finally, when tea is over, the matter of your checks is taken up again, and after half an hour or more, you are handed over to a higher official. He will chat with you pleasantly about America, about relatives he has there, about the Woolworth Tower, the Singer Building, the Grand Cañon and the rest of the seven wonders of America. He will be persistent, for even the busiest Russian is courteous enough to show interest in you and your land. When you have satisfied him with bits of news from America, he will, like as not, ask you personal questions—"Have you been to Russia before?" "What do you think of our tea? Our churches? Our music? Our cigarettes? Our padded *isvostiks*?"

Then about two hours after you have entered the building, you begin to see light ahead. And when a good part of the day has passed, you are able to take your leave of the banker and pass between the rows of sentries again to the street.

All this is very exasperating to an American to whom the business of cashing a traveler's check is only a matter of seconds, but it is the way of the Russ, and one must do as the Russians do so long as he deals with them. There is no use trying to talk about American speed and efficiency; it will be like speaking in a foreign tongue. The Russian is slow, he likes being slow, he has been slow for generations. But, despite that, he manages to accomplish a fair amount of business.

I am often tempted to think that one reason why the Russian merchant is such a poor business man is that he is too fond of enjoying himself. Eating and

drinking must be the king of indoor sports for this Russ. The proverbial protracted New York business luncheon is only a hasty bite compared with the collation the Russian sits down to in mid-afternoon. Business is such a bother and eating is such fun that, on the whole, the Russian merchant would rather eat.

There is another way of looking at the same situation. The Russian has learned a salient truth that Americans utterly lack. He believes—and acts accordingly—that it is far more important to make a life than to make a living. According to his standards, American business men are merely machines, slaves to commerce, dollar grabbers. The more I see of American business, the more I am inclined to believe that there is much to be said for this Russian view.

Despite your efforts to the contrary, the Russian merchant will insist on bartering. Americans sell, Russians haggle. Russia has not yet grown out of the habit of fairs where haggling is a fine art. Nijni Novgorod is still a big factor in her business year, and there are hundreds of such fairs on a smaller scale all over the Empire where you buy everything from Singer Sewing-machines to fossil mastodon ivory.

Likewise, the Russian merchant is often amenable to a personal financial inducement. Add to every bid made in Russia about 25% for distribution among worthy traders, and you have struck a safe average on which to do business. This may be lamentable, but it is true, and one must adjust himself to the situation. One will find that in practically every walk of life and in every sort of business, there are Russians capable of being bribed; more, they expect to be bribed.

Here again is a situation an American merchant may

fail to comprehend. Imagine, if you can, a New York merchant being amenable to a bribe. . . . But possibly you can imagine it! The Russian is out and out in his dickering about such things. On the whole, we are more honest than the Russian, but I am inclined to believe that the difference is merely a matter of the terms we use and that no invidious comparisons can be made. Russia is young in business, her methods are the blunt, stumbling methods of youth. Some day she may become polished and subtle in commerce, and then we will call her shrewd, capable, masterly!

The classic example of graft in Russia happened during the building of the Trans-Siberian Railway. We generally conceive of that railroad as a straight line cleaving the heart of the continent. Far from it. When the road was building a brilliant band of agents traveled ahead of the construction gangs and visited the city fathers of the towns on the proposed route. They told what the proximity of the railroad would mean to the town, and in glowing colors painted the far-famed American "boost." Then the agents got down to business; for such and such considerations they would see that the line came to the town, etc., etc. Tomsk, then the largest city in Siberia, waved these agents away. Tomsk could afford to. But the agents made good their word. The tracks were run south of Tomsk by 48 miles, and to-day the intellectual and mining center of Siberia is on a branch line!

The results of this tariff can be seen all along the route to-day. Here is the station settlement; yonder on the horizon is the suggestion of the town. When the agents came to explain to Petersburg the snaking of the line, they offered a plausible excuse—had the

railroad gone through the center of the towns they would not grow so rapidly as though it were laid some distance away; as it was, the towns would now grow to the railroad. And this, luckily, is what has happened!

Another outcropping of the East can be seen in the Russian's readiness to go into bankruptcy, and his insistence on long-time payments. Here are two situations against which the American exporter must safeguard himself. Until recently, the money in Russia was tied up in the hands of the few; with the growth of industries consequent on the war and just previous to it, much of the money has been transferred to the people. This distribution will result in a more healthy financial situation. Instead of spending their money, as heretofore, for vodka, the common people have been saving it, and with the increased business sense that comes from abstinence from drink, will come intelligence in spending money and conscientiousness in paying debts.

Several American firms have met this situation by the installment-paying plan, and they have been successful. The results have come slowly, but they have come through this patience and belief in the people. American sewing-machines, American harvesters, American lamps will be seen in every part of the Russian Empire. They are there to stay, despite German competition, because in these instances American goods are superior to others and because American merchants have met the Russian consumer on his own ground.

Trade with Russia must, of necessity, be built up slowly. It must have its basis in a mutual understanding of the two peoples concerned.

## III

The other day a banker asked me these two leading questions:

"Why is it so difficult for us to float a Russian loan whereas, during the Japanese War, we had no trouble in floating a Japanese loan?"

"Is there any chance of Russia repudiating her debts accrued during this war?"

My answers took the following form:

During the Japanese War, Japanese bonds were hawked about America and they had the backing of Jewish banking firms. Scarcely a Jewish pawnbroker in America but was approached to buy them. Hundreds did. You can never consider any financial situation regarding Russia without taking into account the bitter hatred of the Jew for the Russian. It comes out in a thousand different little ways, and it has as many sources of power to draw on. There is as much to say against the Jewish methods as there is against Russia's methods in handling the Jewish problem; the blame is about equally divided. Meantime, neither will concede the other a point and the fight is a draw, with Russians always quiescently and sometimes violently anti-Semitic, and the Jews actively anti-Russian in every quarter of the globe.

German influence has also to be counted. As they used to say in Europe, of all the colonies Germany possessed, Russia was the most profitable. The industries were almost entirely in German hands and much of the mining was maintained by German money. German influence was so strong that it could foment revolutions and call strikes whenever there was the slight-

est chance that foreign capital might endanger German interests in Russia. When France began to be financially interested in Russia, Germany threatened that, should Russia enter into an agreement with France, she would consider the act tantamount to a declaration of war. In short, Germany has held Russia in the hollow of her financial hand, and she will use every available influence in other lands against the floating of Russian loans.

In 1904 Germany exported goods to Russia valued at 50,000,000 marks; by 1913 she had raised those export figures to 800,000,000 marks. When Russia came out of the Japanese conflict, she was weakened commercially. It was a war of governments and not of peoples. Germany knew this all too well. She dickered with the Russian Government and found its price. Russia was forced into signing a commercial treaty that was thoroughly one-sided, and in the years that followed Germany reaped every possible benefit from the arrangement.

If Russia can free herself from the German industrial and commercial yoke, if the German merchants (there are some 400,000 of them now interned in Russia) are made to return to their own country after the war, then there will be a legitimate chance for fair competition for Russian markets. Fortunately, Russia has had sufficient power to keep a hold on some of her industries and during the war to develop other industries. It is to be hoped that, after peace is declared, she will hold her own against a repetition of Teutonic commercial subjugation.

## IV

The idea of Russia's repudiating her debts is rather fantastic. A nation repudiates its debts only when it is permitted to do so. Were Russia utterly lacking in natural resources and were she not allied with powers that have strong financial foundations and keen financial understanding, one might fear for Russia's future action. But she has endless resources and untold wealth, and she is leagued with nations that hold her so in their debt that they can not only guide but even force her hand, if that is necessary.

France, which among the powers has the clearest understanding of international finance, was not loath to loan Russia money. Should she permit Russia to repudiate her debts, thousands of French investors would be wiped out. England has done the same. Russia owes too much money to repudiate a copeck of her debts.

In the great game of dollars that underlay this conflict, Germany placed her money on the wrong horse. She believed that she held sufficient power at Petrograd to control the Russian Government, even though Russia were her enemy. Constant rumors of a separate peace, drifting out from Berlin news agencies, indicated this belief to be strong even as late as the fall of 1916. Even at that hour Germany's horse was leading in Russia. Then came the flare-up between the Douma and the Government, between the people and the pro-German element at Petrograd; Germany discovered that this was a people's war and that the people were dictating to their Government. In 1902 the war was a juggling of finance; in 1914-16, it be-



came a conflict of ideals, the struggle of the Russian people to assert their own nationality in their own land.

Upon the Russian people, upon their willingness to work in legitimate competition and just coöperation will depend the development of Russian resources.

A nation is no longer great merely for its statesmen, but great because of its workers—its farmers, its puddlers, its spinners, its shopkeepers. In these Russia is great indeed. She has the workers and the raw material and the willingness. The productivity of the people has increased 40% during the war. Russia now needs only capital to develop these vast resources and to bring them to the markets of the world.

She needs railroads. Even though the war has commanded most of the Government's attention, there has been found sufficient time, funds and energy to push ahead the work on new lines that total some 8,000 miles through untouched parts of the Empire. There are 45,000 miles of railroads in operation to-day.<sup>1</sup> Two-thirds of them are operated by the Government, the other third being owned and operated by private companies working under State control and with State guarantee. Plans are now made for the completion of 25,000 miles of tracks by the end of 1922, in addition to thousands of miles of canals.

The Trans-Siberian has been double-tracked throughout its entire length; the Amur Railroad, which reaches over the shoulder of North Manchuria, has finally been completed; and a line extending from the Caspian across southwest Asia to Minusinsk and up to the trunk

<sup>1</sup> In European Russia there are 16 miles of railroad per thousand square miles of territory; in Asiatic Russia, 2. Compare this with other nations: In the United States, 65 miles; in France, 142; in Germany, 176; in Great Britain, 181.

line of the Trans-Siberian is now about finished. Each of these means the opening up of great stretches of territory. The Amur and its subsidiary lines link the Lena gold fields with the outer world, territory as rich if not richer than our Klondike, and the Trans-Caspian brings the immense wheat and cattle lands into touch with their markets.

In these railroads will be found another answer to the rumor of Russia's repudiating her debts, for in them lies the future development of the Empire. Considered as a whole, Russia to-day is in about the same state as the Dakotas were thirty years ago, when the railroads were just breaking through to open up the rich land to settlers and commerce.

## v

The lack of an all-year port has been the greatest deterrent to Russian commercial progress. It has forced her to play into German hands. On all sides she is faced with alien control. In the south the Turk has maintained his grip on the Dardanelles; England holds the Persian Gulf; Japan holds Dalny and a goodly strip of the Liaotung Peninsula. Archangel and Vladivostok are frozen tight as drums for several months each year. The new port of Alexandrovsk on the White Sea is free from ice all the year, and a new trunk line links it up with the chief branches that radiate from Petrograd and Moscow. While Alexandrovsk will help the situation somewhat, Russia can never grow commercially until she has a warm water outlet for her immense stores. That she would be awarded

this in Constantinople, has been the dream of her people in this war.

Self-contained though she is, Russia requires the contact of commerce to develop her. She needs to rub up against other nations. Too long has she been isolated and exploited by one power. Her rich wheat fields, her bountiful oil supplies, her gold deposits, her platinum mines, her cattle and her timber—all these she has to offer the world. The Continent needs her wheat, her butter, her meat. Under the guise of Danish butter, England eats the Russian product regularly. New York tasted Siberian butter in the winter of 1913-4. Russian butter on American bread—what a combination to contemplate!

Once let Russia open her granaries directly to the world through the Dardanelles, and the food situation both on the Continent and in America will be radically changed. Chicago will be forced out of her wheat-pit deals against the American people. But so long as this, the second greatest granary of the world, is closed, and no competition is permitted, our wheat kings will have us at their mercy.

## VI

There have been some grand times in Russian history when the Government, with a fine disregard for consequences, has followed the dictates of its conscience, when the Tsar, with the mystic fortitude of an early Christian, has ordered reforms for his people that shivered the nation to its very foundations. The freeing of the serfs in the '60's of the 20th Century was one such time, and the prohibition of vodka another.

The effect of the vodka prohibition on the people

has been touched on elsewhere. Let us see what happened to the Government. Forthwith it lost its largest single item of revenue—it came to \$450,000,000 in 1913.<sup>1</sup> Had the ukase been promulgated in times of peace, the immediate economic situation would have been bad enough. As it was a time of war, it threw Russia's finances into utter chaos. This reform was purely idealistic, a mad movement for the attaining of a dream, uninfluenced by any self-interest on the part of the Government. Yet other industries have been found which will eventually bring the hungry state an equal measure of revenue without endangering the health and morals of the people.

Thus far the railroad monopoly has not paid the Government, and such profits as are being made are regularly turned back into further development. The Government's best chance for a paying monopoly, then, is to bridle one or more of the many syndicates that regularly trade in Russia. There is much talk of the sugar industry's being taken over, some of the match and tea industries. The sugar monopoly ought to net the Government not less than \$50,000,000 a year, the sugar beet industry being one of the principal developments of the agricultural life of European Russia. Over 2,000,000 acres are devoted to sugar beets alone, and the annual export of refined sugar averages 200,000 tons per annum.

The consumption of tea in Russia is quite beyond ordinary comprehension. When one reads that the

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that, while Russia with a population of 182,000,000 spent \$450,000,000 for liquor in 1913, Great Britain's bill came to \$835,000,000 and the United States to \$1,750,000,000. These figures, however, must not be construed as placing Russia at the foot of the list in liquor consumption, the extreme cheapness of the vodka being a qualifying factor.

Empire drinks up 166,000,000 pounds of tea each year, he can immediately see another industry that the Government might monopolize for the increase of revenue. Already the Government owns the largest of the five tea factories in the Empire.

The Russian Government has no intention of returning to its previous liquor monopoly and has stated so emphatically through its Minister of Finance, M. Barck. In other words, the Government does not intend that the nation shall slip back into the pitfall of drink that kept it in darkness for so many years.

It is with a sober, frugal Russia that the American merchant will have to deal, a nation alert to its opportunities and keenly alive to its resources. Let an infusion of American business methods and competitive acumen be introduced into Russian commerce, and the world will stand in awe of the results.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE RUSSIAN AS A WORKING MAN

#### I

ON the heights above Fersoova we fell among *artelchiks*. The hare track that skirts the Shilka Ridge was too narrow at that point, and too slippery for our ponies and the workmen to pass abreast. Besides, passers-by on the Shilka Trakt are few—that is, desirable passers-by. Trans-Baikalia bears an unenviable reputation for *brodaji*, the murderous vagrants and escaped convicts of Siberia. But these strangers appeared harmless enough, despite their fearsome beards.

They were fully a dozen stalwart, middle-aged men led by an ancient of days bearing a kit of carpenter's tools. Some had bulging sacks slung over their shoulders, some tea kettles dangling at their belts. All were poorly clothed—rude sheepskin *tulups* or great coats, gaudy red and blue work shirts, with tails flaunting above trouser tops, knee-high boots, and black sugar-loaf sheep-skin hats. They were journeying up the river to Blagowestchensk to build a house, they said. Yes, we were right, they formed an *artel*, one of those communistic bands of workmen that comprise the nucleus of the Russian peasant industrial system. True to Russian hospitality, they begged us to ride back to

a clearing in the wood where a fire could be built and tea made. And there it was that we talked of *artels* and coöperation, and all those unaccountable socialistic things that exist in the heart of autocratic Moscovy.

"So you are Americanski," began the ancient after the manner of the peasant. "Americanski. . . . A great country yours. Every one gets rich in America."

"No, only a few are rich," I hastened to assure him. "The working people are mostly poor—and most every one works."

"And do they have *artels*?"

"They have unions. . . ."

"No, *artels*, like we are. I have read of your unions. We can't have them here. They're not allowed." He seemed to catch the look of confusion on my face and went on to explain. "We work together, we men. We are a carpenter's *artel*. When you want to build a house, you hire us. When you pay, you pay me. I take the money and pay the expenses and then we share up. I am the *starosta*."

He went on further to explain how the *artel* works, how it may be devoted to one trade or a part of one trade or to several trades, but the rule holds throughout that the members earn share and share alike. A leader known as the *starosta* is chosen, and upon him devolves the management of the band's affairs. He arranges for passports, seeks out work, provides tools, materials and supplies, collects wages and distributes the profits equally.

When he had finished and was sipping noisily the hot tea, we sat wondering where else on the globe was there such confidence in the honesty of a leader. Had we discovered Utopia here in the heart of Siberia? We

let the question rest for a time, and satisfied ourselves with asking if all the *artels* wandered about from place to place.

"Not all," he said thoughtfully, "but you meet us everywhere." And he swept the horizon with an inclusive gesture. "On every road, on every farm, in every town and city from Vilna to Vladivostok you will find us. Even in the baron's houses the servants will form an *artel*; even the convicts and the exiles do the same. Some stay in one place, others just wander about from place to place, taking the work where they find it. Some get very rich. We are very poor."

The last he had said not in any spirit of discontent, but just as a statement of the fact. Riches and poverty alike come from God, the faithful Russian believes.

"Your men must trust you," we interposed. "Workmen in America do not often trust their foremen as your men do."

He began to laugh and stroke his beard, for the compliment pleased him.

"They aren't like us, that's why. We have learned to trust each other. We have always been peasants," he went on naively. "And for four hundred years we were serfs, bound to the soil. We learned in those long years to help one another and to work together. We could not trust our masters, because they did us wrong, so we clung together. A peasant is always a peasant. We didn't cease being peasants because we were freed. We ceased being slaves. We have been free now nearly sixty years, but we still work together. That is why we have *artels*. You have unions—yes—I have read of them. Instead we have *artels*. Unions are national—all over the country—and those the government for-



bids here. But the *artel* is just a few—like we are.” He fell to his tea again.

To the Russian, forming an *artel* is as natural as breathing. This seems true of the entire peasant body. Over the glasses, for example, a project is discussed, and forthwith an *artel* formed and a *starosta* elected. Next to no funds are required, some *artels* starting with as little capital as fifteen dollars. The work may be sweeping the streets, building houses, or, as in many sections, the development of the *kustarny*, the cottage industries for which Russia has become famous of late years.

As we went on our way down the *trakt*, the words of the *starosta* began to arrange themselves in their proper category. What he had stated was the peasant view of the matter. Their power of coöperation was due to the fact that they had been obliged for four centuries to coöperate that they might defend their all-too-few rights. And not yet had they ceased being peasants, although they had been free men for half a century.

Later in the journey we called upon the president of the local bank at Blagowestchensk, the New York of Siberia, a thriving town on the Amur that is truly American in many aspects. Having been in America, M. Gordhon knew our institutions and spoke our tongue. To him we applied for the other side of the peasant's story. Yes, our friends of the Shilka Trakt had been right, class solidarity had been born of class suffering.

“But you must make this distinction,” he said with emphasis. “Whereas the peasants did suffer many things and are suffering them to-day, their masters have

not been altogether cruel. In no country is so much being done for the furtherance of the peasants' interests. Have you seen the handicrafts of the peasants?"

We mentioned places where we had seen them for sale, and the villages where they were being made.

"Well, then you know. They are born artists. And so long as they remain craftsmen, their work will be artistic. It has grown more artistic as it came down from generation to generation. These cottage industries are only just being heard of in the big world outside. London flocks to an exhibition of the wares. Paris goes wild over them. They bring large sums in New York. And yet the cottage industries of Russia have been going on for generations. You used to have them in America."

"A few exist to-day," we assured him. "In Deerfield, an old town of the Connecticut Valley, and at Hingham, in Massachusetts, and in other places."

He smiled, "What would you say if I told you that there are ten to twelve million people in Russia employed in cottage industries alone?"

He let the figure settle in our minds, lit another cigarette, and went on in that thoughtful manner bankers the world over seem to have when they discuss economic matters.

"During the past twenty-five years Russia has seen an unprecedented growth of her urban industries. The factory hand has become an element to conjure with. Foreign capital and our national desire to foster home industries—the latter furthered by a high tariff—have turned many cities into thriving manufacturing centers. Compare Moscow of twenty-five years ago with

Moscow to-day. I remember it as it was then. The growth has been wonderful! Peasants who used to live on their crops are flocking to the cities in winter. In summer many are back on the farm again. The number of factory hands totals over one and a half million, this not including Poland and Finland."

"You mean then that the cottage industries are falling off?"

"Quite the reverse, quite. Compare the figures—ten to twelve million workers in the *kustarny* to one and a half million workers in the factories! No, the development of the *kustarny* during the past three decades has been spontaneous and widespread through the Empire. Whole villages that used to depend on farming for their livelihood have now formed themselves into *artels*, and are working the full twelve months at these industries. Some farm half the year and work indoors the rest of the time. It is most astonishing."

"But how do you account for such a contradictory state of affairs?" we asked. "There is no denying that the peasant makes only a meager living out of his crops, and when his crops fail he starves. If he goes to the city, there is work in the factory. He no longer has to bother his head about the farm. It is human nature to expect the advantages of the factory to overcome his native attachment to the soil."

"It may be human nature, but it is not the Slav nature." M. Gordhon replied slowly. "When you sound the depths of the Slav you will find that he exercises to a remarkable degree what might be called spiritual frugality. He is self-contained, just as Russia is self-contained. He is naturally resourceful. We were speaking of the cottage industries. They are

worked by *artels*. It is true that their power for coöperation, as shown in the *artel*, is due to the peasants' having coöperated for their own benefit through four centuries, but it is also true that the peasant has within himself many talents. He is primarily the farmer, the tiller of the soil, the man with the hoe. But he has learned many other arts. Though he is slow to learn them, years of training and years of necessity have taught him to develop his own natural talents."

"The knack for making things is not native with the peasant?"

"Partly yes, partly no. You must remember that while much has been written on the sufferings of the Russian peasant during his days of serfdom, little mention is made of the great good rendered him by many of his masters. There are two sides to every story, and there are two sides to his. An honest and persistent effort was made by many of the nobility all over the empire to furnish employment for their serfs during those long winter nights and days when inclement and frigid weather prevented their tilling the soil. Where else than Russia could you find such generosity?"

"It was done by slave owners in the southern states of America." I proffered the information.

"Well, then you have an analogy. What some of your slave owners did, the serf owners here in Russia were doing. The negro and the peasant alike owe their knowledge of handicraft to their masters. Of course, there was their own innate gift for making things with the hands that all people of the soil possess, and there was their mutual endeavor which has found expression

in the *artel*. And there you have both sides of the story of the *artel* and *kustarny*."

"The government is encouraging these cottage industries, of course."

"Yes, I was going to mention that." He reached for a book behind his desk and ran his finger down a column of figures. "The report of the Department of Rural Economy shows that there are twelve technical schools teaching handicraft, that the *kustarny* stores and workshops were subsidized by the Government, the budget for this work amounting to over half a million roubles annually." He glanced up from the book. "There is, in addition, the assistance rendered by the *Zemstvos* or local governments. They often act as middlemen, supplying the raw materials and handling the finished product. Here you can see on the map just where the *kustarny* are located." He unfolded the colored map and read us rapidly figures and facts.

"The Governments of Moscow, Vladimir, Tver, Kostroma, Nijni Novgorod and Jaroslav are where the handicrafts thrive especially. Though the products and the labor are widely diversified, the output falls into five groups: wood, metal, other minerals, leather and woven goods. Of these the largest and most important is the wood industry. One district manufactures 2,000 sleighs annually in addition to carts and other vehicles. Seven thousand *tarantasses* come from Vladimir alone each year. Kaluga with its 2,200 workmen and 900 shops turns out barrels. Eighty-seven villages of the Moscow Government make rude peasant-painted furniture. One hundred and twenty shops in the same district are devoted to toys, employing 2,000 peasants, and turning out each year

a supply worth \$250,000. In the Tver Government 6,000 peasants make nothing but pump handles, whilst another 2,000 are employed in extracting tar from trees. It is reckoned that fully 100,000 men are engaged in making cart wheels in the various villages of Great Russia. In point of output, the wooden spoon industry is the largest. These painted and lacquered spoons are used all over the empire, and find a ready market in the Far East, China being the chief customer, with Persia as a close second. Fully 100,000,000 are made each year, most of them coming from the Vladimir and Kursk Governments. To make a spoon often requires the labors of fifteen different *artels*—think of it, fifteen *artels*—although for the poorer quality one man is sufficient. A good handicrafter can turn out 150 of the spoons in a day. The bulk, however, goes through at least three separate processes, employing three *artels*. The profits for a worker rarely amount to more than \$20 a year.

“Bast and limewood sandals worn by the peasantry generally come from the village of Simeonofka and the city of Nijni Novgorod, where during a season of five months a rapid worker can finish 400 pairs. Baskets are made principally in the district of Zwenigorod, and mats in Kostroma. Linen is woven at Jaroslav, and in most villages spinning-wheels and distaffs are made. Tver is the main book country; in one town fifty-five per cent of the population are employed. At Tver 350 workmen prepare annually \$40,000 worth of finished leather.

“There you see what staple articles are made. Those are only a few.” He spread out the map impressively. “Look at the finer arts. Peasant jewelry is made in

fifty villages on the Volga in the Kostroma Government. Some of it is valuable indeed, much is cheap and tawdry. A secret process of gilding is employed, a process learned from the Tartars, it is said. The natives guard it jealously. In the same manner do the makers of *ikons* guard their secret in the Government of Vladimir, which furnishes practically all the *ikons* in Russia. A special process of mixing and grinding the paints to produce a glossy finish has been discovered. The natives draw and paint the religious figures after patterns handed down through generations. Few of them know the first elements of drawing, though their work lacks nothing in artistic effect. As in the making of spoons, the manufacturing of *ikons* employs several *artels*.

"Everywhere in the bazaars you see native pottery. To be sure, it is crude, but it has many redeeming elements, mainly its beauty of line and its durability. Poltava and Viatka are the centers for the industry; there some 30,000 peasants are employed, with an output valued at \$150,000. The workers' wages range from twenty-five roubles (\$12.50) to \$100 a year. The making of locks is practically a monopoly of the *kustarny*. Pavlovo is the center. The wages rarely go above \$2 a week.

"The women play a great part in this work. Russian women of all classes are good housewives. They are constantly employed in sewing, embroidering and in some instances weaving. This is particularly true of the peasant housewives. In their hands the weaving industry has become a business of first importance. When they do not work in the home, they meet in the community workshop or *svieteika*. The best linen

comes from Jaroslav, Kostroma, Moscow and Vladimir, where fully 60,000 families find employment. The wages are fifty copecks—twenty-five cents—a day. The peasant women of Vladimir make a specialty of embroidering aprons, towels and table linen. At one time lacemaking was a thriving industry, but of late it has fallen into decay. The making of shawls and scarfs, limited to the Government of Orenburg, has shown a decided increase. The output is valued at \$75,000 annually.

“But you can see by these figures what I meant in saying that the *kustarny* thrive. They average an annual total turnover of \$400,000,000. Many of these peasant workers live miles from the railroad and centers of civilization, most of them are underpaid and exploited by wily middlemen, and still the work is increasing yearly. And it will increase so long as the peasant in Russia maintains his singular position in the social scale. Once he has learned the ways of what we term urban civilization, much of his artistic and handicraft ability will be lost.”

We rose to go. We had long overstayed the limits of a call, even a call paid to a Russian banker, and we now hurried to the offices of an American harvester company, whose representative had invited us to luncheon. We found him in the yard talking busily to a group of men. They were all respectably dressed. Some had fur coats and hats, though all wore high boots. One or two wore white collars and cravats. They were examining a harvester of the latest type with the name of an Illinois firm painted on its side, while the agent was showing them how it worked and answering their questions.



When they had gone he came in. "Not a bad morning's work," he said, throwing off his coat. "They bought two, and I'll get 'em to take another if they don't look out. They've plenty of money."

"Looked prosperous enough," we observed.

"Why, I guess that *artel* has several thousand in the bank."

"Was that an *artel*?"

"Surely, that's the way they get it." He smiled. "Coöperation, my boy, coöperation. . . ."

## II

The coöperative movement in Russia indicates one respect in which that country leads the world. So unprecedented has been the growth in the past twenty years that fully one-third of the population of Russia to-day is concerned either directly or indirectly with the movement. In this Russia is even further in advance than Germany, which means that, sociologically speaking, she is a very great distance ahead of the United States.

The proverbial inch of statistics will here go farther than a mile of explanation. The various coöperative societies in Russia now number over 37,000, of which 15,000 are credit, loan and savings societies, 11,000 consumers' leagues, 10,000 agricultural associations and 1,000 companies of artisans. The loan societies have over 9,000,000 members, the consumers' leagues, 1,500,000, and the agricultural associations, 1,000,000.

Turn to the United States and seek a parallel. Our only agricultural combinations are certain groups of fruit growers in the West who have combined for the

marketing of their crops.<sup>1</sup> There is sporadic talk among more advanced and socialistic farmers about forming coöperative associations; and of course we have the grange, which in many districts is striving to be something more than a social organization for the purpose of saving the rural populace from extinction by ennui. We also have building and loan associations, and in the recent establishment of rural credit banks there is a suggestion of coöperation. Further than that we have not advanced. Our consumers' leagues, while doing noble work in the betterment of factory conditions, cannot be said to have yet become a vital element in the nation or in any one city.

Now conceive, if you can, New York City meeting the enforced high cost of living (enforced through manipulation) by giving the local branch of the Consumers' League a cash credit and directing it to buy butter, eggs, meat, bread, etc., for the populace. And conceive a great number of the people of New York belonging to the Consumers' League and making their purchases of provisions through that organization and from the society's stores supported by such purchases. It reads like the dream of a rabid socialist, a mad Utopia!

Yet this is exactly what the city Government of Petrograd did during 1916. Speculators had pushed the cost of living out of the reach of thousands of the people. The city fathers turned to the Consumers' League, gave it a credit of \$25,000 to help initiate the operation, and made it responsible for furnishing food-stuffs. . . . Lunn, the socialist mayor of Schenectady,

<sup>1</sup> Compare this with but one item. Of the butter exported annually from Siberia—the "West" of Russia—70% is produced by coöperative creameries.

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New York, tried a similar movement during a coal famine in his administration—and the good folks of that city have not yet ceased being scandalized by the memory of it!

The Russian artisan and the Russian farmer may be sadly ignorant of modern methods, but as coöperative workers they bear the torch for the rest of the world. Go into any walk of life you choose, and you will discover coöperation. The old *starosta* of the Amur Trakt was right; his fellows can be found anywhere from Vilna to Vladivostok. Due to their coöperation Russia possesses a better rural credit system than the United States, for example.

In many instances our Western farmers and ranchers are financed by Wall Street and they must agree to the exorbitant interest demanded by the local banks representing New York institutions. So serious has the condition grown that, when Congress recently made an investigation of the number and state of tenant farmers in the country, it was deemed unwise to print the results; nor will investigators find those figures open to public inspection at Washington.

Singularly enough, the Russian Government deserves a major share of praise for the success of the credit institutions. "The financial help given by our Treasury," says Prof. Totomianz of Moscow University,<sup>1</sup> "to the Credit coöperatives, Loan and Savings Associations, the *Zemstvos*' Banks and Coöperative Unions reached on July 15, 1915, the sum of 321,500,000 roubles of which 52 millions are loans contributed to the capital stock, and the rest, short-term loans. The war had not interfered with the assistance which is ren-

<sup>1</sup> *The Russian Review*, September, 1916.

dered to Credit Societies by a special 'Department of Coöperation,' so to speak, that is, by the Board of Small Credit. From July, 1914, to April 5, 1915, the number of credit societies increased by 689. Besides, the Board has recently permitted the local committees of the branches of the State Bank to give credit to all types of coöperative institutions.

"But while rendering a tremendous material assistance to Credit Coöperation, our government at the same time does not encourage the growth of Statute-regulated Coöperative Unions. We have no more than 31 Unions of Coöperative organizations. In view of the fact that the statutes of many Unions have failed to be legally approved, and because of the absence of a harmonious coöperative legislation, it has been noticed that in the second half of the year 1914 about 100 new unions of coöperatives of various types were established on the basis of notarial contracts. These Contract Unions usually combine coöperative institutions of various types, but, unfortunately, they cannot extend to a great number of coöperative organizations.

"Generally speaking, close and consorted collaboration of the coöperative institutions of all types is a characteristic trait of the Russian coöperative movement, by which it is advantageously distinguished from coöperation in some other countries. In many sections of the Empire, Credit Societies, the 'spring of coöperation,' lend material assistance to consumers' leagues, workmen's associations, agricultural societies and companies. As a rule, prohibition of credit sales is stipulated as a condition. Furthermore, owing to the assistance of credit coöperation, companies of artisans

for the supply of munitions have recently begun to organize.

"In addition to State help given to credit coöperatives and the aid lent by the latter to other forms of coöperation, the *Zemstvos* also come to the assistance of the coöperative movement. This is done mainly through the *Zemstvos'* Banks of Small Credit, which are a peculiarity of Russia in the domain of social constructive work. Up to July 1, 1914, 215 of these *Zemstvos* credit associations lent about 42,000,000 roubles to credit coöperatives alone, this sum being contributed to their circulating capital, as well as to their capital stock. Many of these Banks are now granting credit to all other forms of coöperation. Sometimes the assistance assumes a very original form. For example, the Novgorod Bank of Small Credit gives credit to eighty Consumers' Leagues of its district on security of their goods, and places orders for oats, sugar, and flour with the Petrograd Society of Wholesale Operations, that is, the Union of Consumers' Leagues. In Siberia the city administrations of Minusinsk and Kansk became shareholders in the local Consumers' League. The Kansk administration took twenty shares and, besides, decided to give over the government alimentary loan of 20,000 roubles to the Consumers' League. The city administration of Omsk has put free premises at the disposal of the local Consumers' League."

### III

As was observed before, Russia is an agricultural nation and in considering the Russian as a working man, the bulk of one's attention necessarily is claimed

by the rural workers. Agriculture employs 74.6% of the workers; industry, 9.6%; commerce, 3.8%; railways and river traffic, 1.6%; the State, 1.4%; and private employment, 4.6%. In addition there are the unattached bands of workers.

It will be recalled that serfdom was partly brought into existence by the incurable migratory habit of the agricultural laborers. The habit persists to this day. The Russian farmer and artisan alike refuse to stay put. The fact that an appreciable number of the people constantly go about from place to place either in pilgrim bands or working companies is a situation Russian economic life has to reckon with. Each summer, to quote one instance, over a million farmers migrate to the wheat fields of the south. Each winter hordes of them drift into the cities. Due to this migratory habit, the efforts of the Government to colonize Siberia have met with enormous success. Overcrowding in some districts has given the peasant a restless foot, lack of work accounts for some of the unrest, and these and the lack of an inclination to work have bred the hosts of beggars and tramps that infest the countryside and city.

The beggardom of Moscow, Russia's largest industrial center, is a whole study in itself. Factory workers are factory workers the world over—slaves to machines. Farmers may differ—but the peasant classes have traits in common the world over. It is in her beggars, the outcasts of her workaday life, that Russia stands supreme.

Come with me, then, to the Kremlin, to the doss house, to the Khirov Rinok where you can see the real Russian tramp and beggar and sans-coulettes.

## IV

The beggars are leaving the Kremlin for the night. From the towers of the score-odd churches, the boom and hum of the last evening bell dies away. The dusk becomes heavy with silence. A sudden sharp command from a sentry. The word is passed along. A beggar or two drifts onto the broad pavement that leads down to the south gate of the holy fortress. A handful of them creep out of the corners where they have been hiding from the cruel wind. Still another band shuffles out of the enclosure by the barracks. The pavement is filled with a crowd of jostling, singing, groaning, laughing masses of filth and rags, of withered arms and blinded eyes. Most of them barely crawl along. A few, however, move briskly through the fine snow; the day has gone well with them. They link arms.

“Whither, Ivan?”

And Ivan grins as he murmurs, “Doss.” Which means that he has begged money enough to buy a supper of vodka and black bread and hash at a “doss” house, one of the underground restaurants of Moscow.

There are 50,000 beggars in Moscow, and the beggar rank and file by no means constitutes the majority of the city’s submerged tenth. So when you follow the beggars from the Kremlin to the door of one of their “doss” houses, you will find already a large crowd ahead. The ubiquitous *gendarme* makes a vain attempt to herd the men and women into line. He curses and prods them with his fist. Finally the crowd straightens out. Slowly it begins to move—a serpent gliding into a sewer. Another *gendarme* scrutinizes you at the door.

You are shabbily dressed, so he says nothing. Down into the sewer you go.

It is a large cellar set with long wooden tables and rows of backless benches stretching the entire length of the room. At one end a counter where you buy your bread, tea, raw fish or beer—or even what were clothes, old trousers and shirts, if you are rich enough. Soup is served in bowls at a copeck a bowl. An enormous chunk of black bread the size of our loaf costs only three copecks. "Bread" is a misnomer, for there is little enough flour in it. Your supper purchased, you juggle it to the table, where you scramble for a place among the shoving mob.

The room is dark. Only two little lights hung on opposite walls struggle feebly to dispel the darkness. The floor is black and slippery from the melted snow and boot slime of a thousand nights and days. There is much chatter and chaffing. Someone steals a piece of his neighbor's bread and essays to fight, but as a fight means the police, and the "doss" is warm, the others order a truce so that everyone can stay in until the final closing hour. The beggar is a cunning fellow.

In these dark, miasmic holes are fed hundreds of the poor each night. Some sleep there, but the majority drift out when the hour grows late. For there is more to the Russian beggar's life than panhandling, eating and sleeping; he is an integral part of the underground world, and each night he goes to the place where for-gather the pickpockets, criminals, porters, cab-drivers and all the other people of the abyss.

Until you have crossed the frontiers of Russia you do not know what beggars are. Beside them the dere-licts of a Bowery bread-line or the tatterdemalion



vagrants of the Thames Embankment are Beau Brummels in dress, Bostonians in culture. The Russian beggar—and you see him at his best in Russia's most Russian city, Moscow—is the Super-Beggar. In him converge all the ages of mendicancy; he wears the rags of a caveman, has the piety of a medieval pilgrim and the cunning of a modern panhandler. He is the product of his own laziness and disease, and of his fellow-countrymen's belief in the efficacy of works of supererogation—to pass a beggar unheeded in Holy Russia is to endanger one's soul. Besides, according to popular belief, the excesses of an all-night racket during which you have dropped hundreds of roubles into the purse of a *restaurateur* can readily be expiated by dropping a ten-copeck piece into the palm of a beggar the next day.

If you fail to contribute, he will pour maledictions on your head as readily as blessings. The Russians know this, and they give him scant opportunity to abuse them. The shopkeeper does not wave him out of his store, he merely opens the cash drawer and hands the beggar his dole. The beggar crosses himself before the *ikon*—every shop, theater and office in Russia has an *ikon*—and goes out. It is a business transaction pure and simple. Sometimes he may have a charity box and a testimonial to the effect that he is a good man, or that this and that calamity have befallen him; but in the majority of cases he has nothing more than his rags and infirmities as guarantees to assure you he is worthy of charity.

The Mecca of the Russian beggar is the Kremlin at Moscow. Saunter past the little chapel of Our Lady of Iberia, which stands at the gate of the plaza—a

white and gold chapel with a stream of the devout ever coming and going. On its steps sit and lounge a motley of beggars, the first of the religious crew. Once within the gate, the "Red Square" opens out. Ahead, St. Basil's, a gigantic sea-anemone of architecture, an Oriental jumble of vari-colored minarets and bulbous, blue domes topped by gilded, three-armed crosses. On the one hand, the shops of the famous Moscow arcade; on the other, the turreted walls of the Kremlin itself.

Over its crumbling ramparts tower the shafts and spires of the churches. At the "Redeemer's Gate" the wall is broken, showing a glimpse of the glittering buildings within. If you are a Russian you will raise your hat, as you pass through, to the *ikon* enshrined in the tower above; if you are a foreigner and do not, a beggar lout may have knocked it off before you emerge from the tunnel. This is one of the prerogatives of the Kremlin beggar, though he may not always avail himself of it. At all events, be your hat off or on, he will approach with his hand extended.

Once within the Kremlin walls, your gaze fixes on splashes of reds and whites, greens and golds, blues and yellows. Even the barracks are white, and the barracks are a necessary adjunct, as the Kremlin is a fortress. Every man in its garrison wears the Cross of St. George for valor. When the sentry turns away at the end of his beat, a beggar rushes out at you from the shadow of the wall.

Scattered here and there are monuments marking events in the bloody history of Russia. There is the famous Chinese cannon: a huge piece of ancient ordnance, with bronze serpents that wriggle and twist along the barrel. A beggar woman squats to the lee

of it. Nearby is the largest bell in the world, so the Russians claim. Cracked and long since voiceless, it now rests on a masonry foundation. As you approach a shoal of hands clutch at you—dirty hands, palsied hands, hands minus many fingers, amorphous claws, hands of little children, hands of old men, hands of decrepit women; some are not hands at all, only shriveled stumps.

Like their brothers in other lands, the Russian clerics know the benefits and evils of the beggar. They openly encourage him to hang around church doors as an ever-present appeal for charity, that the faithful may never lack the opportunity to carry out the scriptural injunction about the poor. At the same time, however, they are frank in warning visitors against the beggar's pilfering habits. At the entrance of St. Basil's is a large sign: "Beware of Pickpockets!"

As you spell out the words, the beggars leer at you. Inside the grotto chapel can always be found a congregation of men, old women, school girls in their "gymnasium" uniforms, soldiers, and more beggars. The Kremlin beggar, you see, believes that his power as such is enhanced if every now and again he slips into the chapel. So in he shuffles, prostrates himself, crosses himself, and looks the crowd over. If he sees that most of the worshipers have read the sign and are keeping their hands near their wallets, he will dive out into the sunlight once more; but should the congregation seem engrossed in their devotions he will stay awhile, moving now and again from spot to spot in the little, crowded room, always prostrating himself, crossing himself, muttering prayers, and plying his light-fingered trade.

Possibly the only place in the entire Kremlin where you can be free of the beggar is a spot on the ramparts of the south wall. The view from there is one of the boasts of Moscow. Oil the palm of the guard and access to the steps is easy. Far above the city the Kremlin turrets rear their heads. Below is the town, its plains of flat roof-tops broken here and there where a swelling dome or a golden minaret crops up like a tree on a wind-swept steppe. The Moscova winds a serpentine course through the city. A few barges, drawn up to a wharf for the winter, look like mere skiffs. Behind on the ramparts paces a sentry. Above and around the towers of the Kremlin churches the crows circle and dip. Suddenly into the hush, the boom of a bell. Other bells of the Kremlin take it up. Thunder and crash, tinkle and rattle, they ring out the Angelus. Their sound reaches the city. The bells of Moscow's two hundred and thirty-two churches answer. For five minutes the towers rock. The city is one great cacophony. Then peace settles down once more. The sentry approaches: "You must leave; the gates are about to close."

For five minutes you have missed the haunting whine of the beggars. Once more on the pavement below, however, you are in their midst as they wend their way to the city for the night, out to the "doss" houses and the Khirov Rinok.

In beggardom the Khirov Rinok, or the lodging-house of the poor, is dubbed the "Flea Market," for reasons which need no explanation. In summer the beggars sleep out of doors, crawling under the shelter of buildings, sleeping under the stalls in the fish market, or on the benches along the bank of the Moscova. In

the winter when even the most sheltered corner is swept by a pitiless blast, sleeping out of doors spells death. So the beggars, having eaten at a "doss" house, shuffle over to the "Flea Market," where clot the pickpockets, the criminals and the birds of passage.

It is a drab quadrangle. A collection of hovels. The windows are grimy. Broken panes are stuffed with bunches of straw and old rags. Under an archway leading into the court are gathered a group of wretches who eye you dully. Ranged along the curb, a line of rickety cabs without drivers or hitching-posts—none are needed!

Pick your way along the broken plank walk. The first door contrasts sharply with the other corners of the place. Through the window can be caught a glimpse of a white interior, a white bed, a white-robed nurse—the hospital. Russia is given to paradoxes. In the worst of hovels you will always find an *ikon* corner clean and orderly. In the midst of the poverty and filth of a city you will discover a hospital. When emigrants are sent out to Siberia, the cars are mere cattle pens on wheels. But the train invariably carries a hospital coach, with a nurse and doctor in attendance. The hospital at the "Flea Market" is a necessary adjunct. Cholera, typhus and typhoid breed here, and scarcely a day passes without a death. With characteristic lack of logic, the authorities do not dream of cleaning out the hole and preventing the spread of disease; instead, they erect a hospital into which poor wretches may crawl and die.

Across the quadrangle is the main building. As you fling back the door, you stumble over the bodies of snoring men. Were they not snoring you would have

taken them for bundles of rags. A murk of vile air strikes your nostrils. Darkness is thick within. On two sides of the large room ranges a row of broad benches, planks set on trestles a yard above the floor. On them, closely packed as sardines in a box, lie sleeping men and women. Those who cannot sleep sit in little groups on the edge of the benches and talk in guttural undertones. A tiny candle, flickering in a sconce at each end of the room, scarcely illuminates the faces enough for recognition.

One of the men on the bench idly kicks his feet. A grunt. Beneath his feet lies a man curled up on the slime of the floor. Beside him are shadows of other forms. Lift one of the planks, and below is another layer. There they lie, without bedding save a handful of straw, without covering save their rags, without air save such as sifts down to them when the door opens. "They've had hard luck," the man who kicks his feet volunteers. "They can't afford to sleep up here with us. This top row costs six copecks. The bottom only costs five."

All ages of men and women are here, all sizes, all nationalities that recognize the Russian flag, all religions, all degrees of poverty and degeneration and disease. The cab drivers and market porters, who make the staggering sum of \$4 a month, are the aristocrats of the crowd. Not only an aristocracy of wealth, but an aristocracy of power, for they are in league with the criminals. They "fix it up" with the thugs to take an unsuspecting charge to a dark hole where the thief can do his work. And the Russian thug, like his beggar brother, is a Super-Thug. He is a simple fellow and he likes direct means. A noose on a stick he throws

over the head of the passer-by. A jerk—and stunned, or with neck broken, the wayfarer tumbles to the pavement and his pockets are rifled. In more favored climes a thief will not kill you if you give him your watch; in Russia he kills you first and then looks to see if you have a watch. So here in the "Flea Market" the cab drivers and the thugs meet to arrange their appointments and divide the swag.

Passing among the groups that sit yawning on the edge of the benches comes a porter. From beneath his rough, padded coat he produces a bunch of radishes, or a chunk of black bread, and now and again a bottle of vodka. He has stolen them from a booth and brings them to the lodging-house of the poor to sell. A clever porter can make as much as fifty copecks a night from his stealings. Besides the edibles, he often brings in old scraps of things that the booth keepers have thrown away as useless. Here is a lout with a handful of disks of tarnished tin. The *moujik* mirror is tin, but when it rusts the shopkeeper is forced to throw it on the ash heap. Then the porter finds it, and sells it in the beggar's lodging-house for a dish!

In a corner of the room an old man tends a pot of hash that steams over a charcoal stove. For a copeck you can buy a dab of this hash served on a newspaper, or, if you are rich enough to buy one of the tarnished mirrors from the porter, on your improvised plate.

All night long these bargainings go on. Men sell and swap their clothes, their little treasures, their food. The junk from half a hundred ash piles is pawed over and bartered in this lodging-house.

Few indeed of the lodgers have anything in the shape of a newspaper or a book. Few indeed are those

who can read; one person in five is the ratio in Russia. Neither can they write. The men of any education who are down and out and who come to these lodgings are so few and far between as to be indistinguishable from the mass.

Though the police watch the place with untiring scrutiny, they rarely come inside except to look for some desperate character, or for a thug who has inflicted violence on one of them and who is known to be an habitu   of the "Flea Market." With little ceremony they rush into the hall, turn over the slumbering forms with their boot toes, cross-question, threaten, and then pass on to the next row of sleepers. Spies have been known to frequent the lodging-house of the poor, though only as a last resort.

The Russian Jew is totally absent, for with characteristic charity the Jew takes care of his own poor. Few of the men in this place can be said to have "fallen." They have never been up—witless fellows, mere riffraff that drift in here for the night or part of the night.

There are many peasants on the sleeping-benches. They have left their farms to find work in the city and, finding only poverty instead, have dropped to this level. Many of them, unaccustomed to the city life, fall sick—and the little hospital at the corner is kept busy.

Thief, thug and cab driver, porter and beggar, peasant and spy rest side by side on the sleeping-benches and on the floor. Over them swarm vermin. The air they breathe is thick with bad tobacco smoke, the reeking odor of wet clothes and boots and the accumulated filth of months. . . .



On the wall above the door hangs a little red light that throws a faint glow over what seems to be a dab of tarnished brass and smoke-blackened colors. Step closer and you see it is an *ikon* of the Christ, with His hand raised, blessing the miasmic mob of His children.

## CHAPTER IX

### DEFINING DOSTOEVSKY AND SOME OTHERS

#### I

**S**HE was a lady, a regular literary lady, and she spoke with the air of one who does not judge books without first reading them.

"But this Dostoevsky—he leaves me feeling like a jellied mass of gloom. I find nothing interesting in him and much that is repellent. Why do the literati rage so furiously about him? Gloom, gloom and more gloom! His novels are without form and void!"

All of which, frankly, expresses the feeling many average readers have about Dostoevsky, the greatest writer Russia has produced. He is either uninteresting or gloomy or both.

The former objection may have sound basis. Dostoevsky seems never to have been convinced of the necessity for following the contemporary conventional form in novel construction. He cannot be said to have copied the style of any one master. A man singularly devoid of the influence of any printed word, save that of the Gospels, his style reflects but one thing—his own nervous, visionary temperament. Moreover, he came before the day when Russian literature was to depend for its effectiveness and individuality upon unusual form, upon a succession of brilliant episodes,

anecdotes and disjointed phrases set between rows of asterisks and ranks of dots. Dostoevsky was not a jeweler turning out unusual types of filigreed punctuation that one can pick up and examine in the hand as he would a brooch or a ring; rather, Dostoevsky was a weaver of great tapestries, a painfully conscientious craftsman. One must view his novels *en masse*, must "stand off" to appreciate the fullness and depth of their literary chiaroscuro.

To call him gloomy is a misnomer. One must employ other standards of judgment than those created by Dostoevsky's own peculiar native literature. Compared with contemporary standards in America, he is gloomy; viewed as a product of Russian life, he is not. It were wiser first to study the Russ soul. After that some semblance of definitive light and shade will emerge from the apparent murk of realism.

In addition, such study of the Russ soul will throw into striking contrast other Russian authors who are generally regarded true sons of the race. It will show Turgenev to have had a European soul under his Slav exterior; to have been a remarkable painter of word landscapes who wrote of an age long since dead albeit he thought it still alive; and these things Turgenev's life and work prove. It will show Tolstoy a mingling of East and West, a veritable battleground on which they fought for dominion; this also is shown in Tolstoy's life and works. Of the three, Dostoevsky most closely approaches an epitome of the Russ soul, which is the genius of the masses.

Again, we are apt to judge Russian literature in terms of the Continental influences which were brought to bear upon it during the past two hundred years.

There was the Classical School, the Romantic, the Natural—merely Slav reflections of what was being written in Europe at the time. When Dostoevsky arrived at notice he baffled his European critics because he did not altogether fit into any of the categories the European schools had produced. A boyish interest in Balzac, Goethe, Schiller, Byron and Racine passed away with adolescence. Epitomizing Russia, he stood alone. Hailed as great, he still was not wholly understood, for the Russian soul at the time was generally misinterpreted and, until Dostoevsky portrayed it in his novels, was but slightly known even to the Russ himself.

To reduce to a few defining words the spiritual characteristics of a people so paradoxical as the Slav is indeed a difficult task. I have attempted it elsewhere in the course of these pages. There are many cross purposes and spiritual "sports" breaking here and there that defy tracing. It can be reduced, however, to this basis; it has the rugged faith of old age and the rebellious ardor of youth. These two elements, found in Dostoevsky's life are, in turn, reflected in his works.

Few men have felt more acutely than Dostoevsky the high cost of writing. Few men paid for their writings so high a price in living and few turned to such good and direct account their investments in actual experience. The man who projects himself into the moods of a character may produce a faithful portrait, but his work will lack the ultimate depth and *finesse* of reality. He who has been born and lived with these moods stands better equipped to portray them in their just proportions. The one sketches a picture; the other keeps a diary.

Therein lies a fundamental definition of Dostoevsky's works; his novels are diaries. *Poor Folk*, the first novel, is a diary of the surroundings of his early life, for, although of the hereditary nobility, he was born in a workhouse and his family of nine lived in two rooms for the first ten years of his life, with poor folk such as Makar Djevuschkin about on all sides. *Insult and Injury* is equally a diary of the Siberian experiences. Of the other novels, no two works could be more striking examples of empirical authorship than *The Gambler* and *The Brothers Karamazov*, representing, as they do respectively, Dostoevsky's gambling in middle life at European spas and his struggle for the ideal man.

In a measure, this writing from personal experience may seem the easiest possible *métier*. Certainly it is the one chosen by the wise novice, for to write about the things one knows intimately and has experienced is the fundamental canon in writing. But there are experiences and experiences, knowledge and knowledge. There are the physical adventures—the wild encounters, the quick turns of luck, the intensifying culmination of anecdotes which, set down with color and suspense, make capital reading for certain moods and states of mind. There are also spiritual adventures, and to recount these requires a pen more delicately adjusted and an eye more keen.

Dostoevsky would have been a spiritual adventurer had he never left his dooryard, had he never been condemned to death, exiled to Siberia, staggered under debt and physical torture all his life. From these physical actualities he extracted their spiritual realities. In portraying them he was paramount, which made him

in his writings preëminently a Russ. These two are contained in each other; that is, however deeply the physical aspects of life may move him, the Russ is stirred to greater depths by their spiritual reactions. It is, indeed, impossible to consider the Russian soul apart from spiritual metabolism, apart from a clash between the rebellious ardor of youth and the sturdy faith of old age.

Sturdy faith is attained not alone by having it moulded into a philosophy of life in youth, or by accepting it as a matter of course, as it may be in the case of illiterates, but by having it put to the test in life, by having battled for its existence in one's philosophy. The predominance of Orthodox dogma in the Russian's religion is, in the majority of cases, due to early training and to acceptance, since fully 60% of the people are illiterate. But in many instances it is due to the fact that it has proven invaluable to men's lives. Dostoevsky was one of these cases. The story is written in his life. He discovers the Bible, for instance, not in a period of adolescent religiosity, but in the confinement of Peter and Paul Fortress. Writing to his brother Michael from his cell, he asks for some books: "But best of all would be a Bible (both Testaments). I need one." He was then aged twenty-seven. Five years later from Omsk, after his term of exile, he writes his creed: "Because I myself have learned it and gone through it, I want to say to you that in such moments (i. e., times of suffering) one does, 'like dry grass,' thirst after faith, and that one finds it in the end solely and simply because one sees the truth more clearly when one is unhappy. I want to say to you about myself, that I am a child of this

age, a child of unfaith and skepticism, and probably (indeed, I know it) shall remain so to the end of my life. How dreadfully has it tormented me (and torments me now)—this longing for faith, which is all the stronger for the proofs I have against it. And yet God gives me sometimes moments of perfect peace; in such moments I have formulated my creed, wherein all is clear and holy to me. This creed is extremely simple; here it is: I believe that there is nothing lovelier, deeper, more sympathetic, more rational, more manly and more perfect than the Saviour. I say to myself with jealous love that not only is there no one else like Him, but that there could be no one else. I would even say more: If any one could prove to me that Christ is outside the truth, and if truth really did exclude Christ, I should prefer to stay with Christ and not with truth."

At fifty-six, despite the prophecy above, he writes to a mother who has sought his counsel: "Your child is now eight years old; make him acquainted with the Gospel, teach him to believe in God, and that in the most orthodox fashion. This is a *sine qua non*; otherwise you can't make a fine human being out of your child, but at best a sufferer, and at worst a careless, lethargic 'success,' which is a still more deplorable fate. You will never find anything better than the Savior anywhere, believe me."

Evidently Dostoevsky's faith did not come easily. He had to battle for it. Once established, it burned with a steady flame. It was a live thing, an intense, intimate, acute reality, placing its mark upon every page of his work.

And therein lies the difference between the school

of realism of which Dostoevsky is the unquestioned leader, and every other school. For there is a realism of the flesh and a realism of the spirit, and the greater realities are spiritual realities. That is why the realism of Dostoevsky is so much more vital than the realism—say of our American Dreiser. Raskolnikov, hero of *Crime and Punishment*, hounded down to the relief of confession by the growing realization of his sin, is a more important study of man than Eugene Whitla, hero of *The Genius*, who is hounded into a sickly decency by his inability to succeed with the opposite course. One man is a conqueror, the other a “careless, lethargic ‘success.’” The one is a study in spiritual realism, the other a study in fleshly realism.

It is this element of spiritual realism that the lady who was perfectly literary, and many others, mistake for gloom. True, there are the dark realities of filth, poverty, lust, suicide, hunger, but they are the fighting elements of the spiritual battle, the brilliant contest of spiritual realities against the sham realities of the flesh. One can see the struggle, just as through the gray-massed storm clouds he sees the brilliant flash and glow of lightning.

Dostoevsky's characters are studies in spiritual metabolism. They are Russian. They are also intensely human. To dismiss them as merely patients from a psychopathic ward is to disregard the presence of the spiritual struggle in man.

Consider his characters one by one through all the twenty-one works, and the rule holds. They are strong or weak literary representations of men and women just in that proportion in which that battle between flesh and spirit is depicted in them. Makar Djevusch-



kin of *Poor Folk*, the old saint in *The Idiot*, Raskolnikov of *Crime and Punishment*, Ilioscha Karamazov of *The Brothers Karamazov*—these and many another are all folk who resist classification according to nerve disorders. They are crystallized cross-sections of the Russ soul. By creating them Dostoevsky became the Russian apostle of spiritual realism, of spiritual action.

Here are his words for it. He is writing about the novel that later was produced under the title of *The Brothers Karamazov*.

"I have my principal figure ready in my mind. A Russian of our class, getting on in years, not particularly cultured, although not uncultured either, and of a certain degree of social importance, quite suddenly, in ripe age, loses his belief in God. His whole life long he has been taken up wholly by work, has never dreamed of escaping from the rut, and, up to his forty-fifth year, has distinguished himself in no wise. (The working out will be purely psychological, profound in feeling, and thoroughly Russian.) The loss of faith has a colossal effect on him. He tries to attach himself to the younger generation—the atheists, Slavs, Occidentalists, the Russian sects and anchorites, the mystics; among others he comes across a Polish Jesuit; thence he descends to the abyss of the Chlysty Sect; and finds at last salvation in Russian soil, the Russian Savior and the Russian God. . . . My dear friend, I have a totally different conception of truth and realism from that of our realists and critics. My God! If one could set down categorically all that we Russians have gone through during the past ten years in the way of spiritual development, all the realists would shriek that it was fantasy; and yet it would be pure

realism! It is the one, true, deep realism. Theirs is altogether too superficial."

## II

In one of his essays, Mr. Gilbert Chesterton observes, "It is the very soul of Russia, as it comes to us like a great wind from out of the lands of sunrise, that a weakness when confessed almost becomes a strength. Most of Russian fiction is a vast, anarchic confessional. It would seem as if the Russian lived not only in agricultural but psychological communes. One of our young novelists, who knows that country well, declared to me that a Russian starts an acquaintance by saying, 'I murdered my sister because her boots creaked. Such are my failings. We can now be friends.' This is a lively caricature, of course, but it is one of those that locates a truth."

Mr. Chesterton's thought came to me forcibly as I approached another Russian that lends himself to definition. I cannot recall that in any of his works Tolstoy has a character acknowledging that he has murdered his sister because her boots creaked, but I do feel that both Tolstoy's life and his writings constitute a "vast, anarchic confessional." His strength lay in his very weakness; his force in his oscillation.

I have epitomized Tolstoy above as a clashing point between East and West, his life a battlefield on which the two elements fought for dominion.

First we must understand what these two contending elements were: The spirit of the East is passivity; the spirit of the West is activity. The East holds to faith without works; the West to works. The East

cultivates a quiescent dogma that leads to annihilation; the West holds dogma to be worthless unless it can be converted into the dynamic ethics of everyday living.

It is futile to study Tolstoy—or any author, for that matter—apart from the way he works spiritually. He may be quite unconscious of those forces' being at work; they are working, nevertheless.

Tolstoy was all too aware of this activity within him; hence the constant disquietude of his life. In fact, so delicately adjusted was his mind and spirit that he veered with each new force. Eternally was he seeking Truth and Righteousness—the Absolute Beauty. Eternally was he a wanderer after them. Eternally did he oscillate because time and again was he disenchanted. Not always did he go forward; often he doubled on his tracks. Now the East dragged at his footsteps; now the West drove him on. He fled from one to the other. He fled from both. Finally, in utter despair, he tottered out to start on his pilgrimage. It was his last flight. It is said that he hoped to find haven in a monastery—the East in Russia. Instead, he found his resting place in the most Western thing Russia has developed; he died beside the railway tracks ? in a little railroad station.

Tolstoy's life reminds one of the action of a man who is locked in a room with many doors, who tries each door time and again. He was successively an aristocrat, born and bred to his station; a student, bowed down with the weight of the world's evils; a brave soldier; a rising man of letters whom the intellectuals dined and flattered; a lover of cafés and chantants and adventuresses; an epicurean; a happily married family man; a landed gentleman of means; a *V Narodnist*—

he embraced the life of his peasants; a novelist who rebelled right and left against the State, the Church, the bourgeois conception of married life and whose literary self-assurance left him utterly impervious to criticism; a preacher and founder of a new religion (this was a reversion at the age of fifty to a scheme he had dreamed out as a university student at the age of eighteen); a delver into æsthetics; a dramatist of force; a schoolteacher—the list is endless.

What was behind it all? or, as he himself expressed it, using Tchernyshevsky's title, "What Is To Be Done?"

A man of constant activities, he was urged on to seek a way out—a reasoning, rational way out. Orthodoxy did not offer him the norm that it did to Dostoevsky, nor, for that matter, did any faith or shade of belief for any length of time. He was both passive and active, non-resistant and rebellious. The restlessness of the man's soul makes him one of the most tragic figures in the history of literature. Russia has had many *Boyoiskately*—seekers after God; most of them either fell back into the abyss of despair or floated into the snug haven of an ecclesiastical religion. But Tolstoy eternally pressed forward; albeit he met with many a spiritual *impasse*.

"What is to be done?" was answered in his life by his continuing to do something as rationally as he knew how, however contradictory it may have been to the thing he had been doing immediately previous or five years before. As his dictum ran, "Say something new, important and necessary to mankind"—and he said it as the state of his mind bade him say.

He left his life an unfinished story. Each student

may make up his own dénouement to that story. Each after the manner of his own thought can answer the question of whither Tolstoy was bound when he left Yasnaya Polyana for the last time. Was he abandoning wife and family? Was he abandoning the peasants whose cause he had so nobly and tirelessly championed? Or was he following the call of the pilgrimage—going on after the Absolute Beauty?

Since the world has come to know Dostoevsky, Tolstoy has lost some of his initial prestige. Whereas before Tolstoy represented the great idealist of the Russian masses, we are now discovering that Dostoevsky came closest to their line of vision. Tolstoy set about leading the *moujik* along a rational path. He met defeat because the *moujik* is anything but a rational creature and because Russia refuses to be measured with the mental foot rule. His life and work represent only one phase of the Russian genus; and of the two his life was greater than his writings. What he did was far more important than what he said.

Dostoevsky was as much a seeker after Absolute Beauty as was Tolstoy, the difference being that Dostoevsky believed that he had found it. Here are his words: "All writers, not ours alone but foreigners also who have sought to represent the Absolute Beauty, were unequal to the task, for it is an infinitely difficult one. The beautiful is the ideal; but ideals with us, as in civilized Europe, have long been wavering. There is in the world only one figure of absolute beauty: Christ. That infinitely lovely figure is, as a matter of course, an infinite marvel (the whole Gospel of St. John is full of this thought: John sees the wonders of the Incarnation, the apparition of the Beautiful.)"

And Dostoevsky held that the ultimate destiny of Russia was to hold up this vision of Absolute Beauty to the world's adoring. "Russia must reveal to the world her own Russian Christ, whom as yet the people know not. . . . There lies, as I believe, the inmost essence of our vast, impending contribution to civilization, whereby we shall awaken the European people; there lies the inmost core of our exuberant and intense existence that is to be."

I am not sure but that in his heart of hearts Tolstoy held Russia's destiny to be somewhat the same—the manifestation of the Russian conception of Absolute Beauty to the world. Tolstoy visualized this Absolute Beauty after the fashion of a glorified peasant in a *moujik's* blouse and boots, his hands and feet pierced with the cruel nails of injustice. Dostoevsky saw Absolute Beauty as a radiant figure, glistening in cloth of gold, whose heart bled for very love of His children. Tolstoy worshiped with his brain and his brawn; Dostoevsky worshiped with his heart and on his knees. Of the two, Dostoevsky came closest to the *moujik's* viewpoint.

### III

Perhaps no two men are more seemingly far apart than Lord Byron and Jack London: one the child of Romanticism and its foremost apostle; the other an apostle of brute force and brute Nature.

In his day Byron was widely read and widely copied; in the evolution of Russian literature the Romantic School constitutes an important stage. He may be said to have influenced the pens of Russians more than any one force exerted during the 19th Century. His popu-

larity was due to the fact that he struck a responsive chord in the Russian.

We generally think of the German as the most sentimental person in the world; at least, he can be the most "mussy" sentimental person. Second to him is the Russ. Russian sentiment is tearful, pessimistic, self-pitying. At almost stated intervals must the Russian experience his troublous times. This is all part and parcel of a make-up which requires an occasional purgative *podvig*, an occasional religious debauch, to clear the spiritual man. In a word, the Russian keeps sane by periodically becoming insanely sentimental. Naturally, to such souls the romanticism of Byron appealed deeply.

Between these "attacks," what?—Jack Londonism!

The favorite American or foreign author in Russia to-day is Jack London. All classes read him. Critics discuss and quarrel over him, and his books continue to sell; you find them in the shops, on railway bookstalls and in the kiosks. He appeals to the exact opposite in the Russ that Byron appealed to. He quickens in them one thing they would possess; he awakens a desire for physical activity.

In Dostoevsky we found a man of spiritual activity. Tolstoy's life and works show a man of constant mental activity. The third author who is characteristically Russian is an apostle of *physical* activity. He is Jack London's Russian counterpart. I refer to Gorky.

At first one usually regards Gorky as the author who has popularized the Russian tramp—the vast army of hooligans, sans-culottes and ex-men.<sup>1</sup> He calls him-

<sup>1</sup> Other Russians, of course, have written of the tramp—Uspensky, Mamine, Reshetvokov and others.

self "the embittered one," as his pseudonym translates—his real name being Alexis Michaelévitch Pyeshkov. He paints in the blackest tones, often exaggerating the facts and atmosphere. But these are only the mediums in which the man happened to work; they were the tools that came easiest to his hands because they were the people and the circumstances and the outlook about which he knew most. Behind his literary machinery is the driving force of a gigantic idea, the lethargy of the Russian from which, once in a while, he is aroused to move, to act, to be. He would cure the paralysis of the Russian will.

By no means did Gorky glorify crime. What he did glorify was the action in crime, in fact, anything that these ex-men can do to rouse themselves from their damnable weariness. Konovalov, the baker who abandons the chance for money and the woman he loves to follow the care-free, individualistic life of the tramp, describes his malady this way: "Well, you see, I became weary. It was such weariness, I tell you, little brother, that at moments I simply could not live. It seemed to me as if I were the only man on the whole earth and, with the exception of myself, there was no living thing anywhere. And in those moments everything was repugnant to me, everything in the world. I became a burden to myself and, if everybody were dead, I wouldn't even sigh. It must have been a disease with me and the reason why I took to drink." In another place the same character acknowledged that "there is a spark lacking in their souls." This "spark" is what I have indicated above—the will to do, the energy to act and achieve.

Much has been written about the spiritual lethargy



that has been consequent on political suppression in Russia. We hear of the "Hamlet soul" that geographical isolation, the long winters and political evils have given the empire. However much of the opposite view he may appear to champion, Gorky combats this fallacy relentlessly in his stories. The tramp is neither isolated nor suppressed in Russia. In fact, to her tramps and outcasts Russia owes much of the development of her outlying provinces. On the other hand, it was due to her hooligan element that some of the worst outbreaks of the Revolution of 1905 came to pass.

The trouble with the Russian soul is that its will to do is not invariably transformed into the type of energy and action that we of the West recognize. Its action is rebellious and iconoclastic. It challenges and would destroy all authority, all contentment, fixed conditions, in short, everything stable. A strong spirit of Buddhistic annihilation possesses the Russ soul. Iserguille of Gorky's tale proclaims that "in life there is room for mighty deeds," and when you begin to analyze what Gorky's characters mean by mighty deeds, you discover that they are nine parts action without purpose—any sort of movement. *To do* is a mighty deed, no matter how or why!

Gorky painted an extreme type, yet it must be confessed that the elements that go to make up his tramps are, to a certain degree, found in almost all classes of Russians. So long as Gorky stuck to that stratum of society he was successful; when he essayed other types, as in *Thomas Gordeyev* and *The Smug Citizen*, he failed of popular support. Recently in his *The Confession* and his autobiography he has returned

to the older forms. In these, as in the earlier works, he shows an ungoverned weakness for exaggeration: he makes his misery too miserable and his poverty too poor. There is a great deal less "Art for Life's Sake" in Gorky than his first critics claimed—and a very great deal of "Art for Art's Sake."

To judge the entirety of the Russian character by the extreme low types that Gorky depicts would be manifestly unfair. The Russian is lethargic, but he also can be quickly stirred to the depths. The Russian is the blindest sort of idealist. His race is the most persistently idealistic of any under the sun. That is why the Russians make such poor business men and such good musicians, such poor politicians and such faithful soldiers.

During the past few years Gorky's popularity in Russia has suffered a decline. So far as the Russians themselves are concerned, he is long since dead. The initial interest in his work was the sort of interest that any novelty creates. After that wore off there was little left. Russian readers do not care to be fed on literature about their underworld any more than American readers do.<sup>1</sup>

Frankly, the interests of the thinking Russian people are not centered on the terrors of poverty, the evils of the bureaucracy, exile and *pogroms*, as Americans have been led to believe. Americans found Gorky highly entertaining because they were led to believe that his pictures were the solemn truth and that the

<sup>1</sup> An example of this was found in the experience of a certain Russian editor who started to run serially Stephen Graham's *With Poor Immigrants to America*. The copy was vitally interesting, but after the first few installments it was stopped, because readers could not arouse any enthusiasm or interest over poor immigrants.

thinking people of Russia *did* live on these topics. Gorky is past and gone. Russian letters will look upon his like many times again, for there are others who are carrying on the really essential ideas of Gorky in writing about other strata of society in Russia. Sologub is depicting the lethargy of life in the small provincial town among the bourgeoisie and Kuprin has shown army and barracks life as it was before the war.<sup>1</sup>

## IV

In these sketches I have made no attempt to trace the development of the Russian novel (rather an ambitious work to essay within the compass of one short chapter!), but to set down ideas that have come to me from time to time as I read and reread the Russians. Fortunately for American readers, adequate translations of most of the important Russians are now available, and the Russian novel will in time receive its just share of attention.

Literature in Russia is a sensitive index to the evolution of freedom. Now most of us, when we think of freedom in Russia, can visualize only freedom from the cruelty of the Government. The Russian knows other bondage—bondage more terrible and defeat more crushing. It knows the inherent weakness of its own soul. The deeper one goes into a study of Russia and the Russian people, the more he recognizes the utter futility of blaming every evil in Russia on the Government, of tracing back every weakness to the weakness of the State. It is high time we looked at

<sup>1</sup> Of late it would seem that Kuprin has embraced mysticism after a fashion. He is said to have been a bosom friend of Rasputin, the late court confessor and leader of a sect of fleshly mystics.

Russian literature in another light. It is an index of self-freedom, spiritual freedom, yes, even physical freedom. In this light read Dostoevsky, and you find him the master of spiritual freedom, of spiritual realism, of spiritual activity. Read Tolstoy, and you find him the apostle of rational freedom, of mental activity. Read Gorky, and, for all his bitterness, you hear the gospel of physical activity, the call of the will to do.

During the past decade have arisen other men and other types of work. Some of it was either retreat into decadence or merely a reflection of the contemporary modes of Continental writers.

Russia's decadence is the decadence of youth. It is raw, gauche, pornographic. There is little artistry about it. *Sanine*, *Homo Sapiens* and Kouzmine's *The Wings* are thoroughly dull books because they are thoroughly inartistic. Russia took to them because decadence was in the air. America took to them because advertising was in the papers and because many American readers still hold that the presence of sex questions in a book automatically makes it great literature. None of these books represented any new truth or pointed to any new solution of the spiritual bondage of Russia and the world. They were distorted reflections of better books by greater men in other countries. All three books were interesting—as hashish is interesting to one who has just heard of the hashish habit—but to a world grown old and sophisticated in books they are puerile and footless.

Russia will come out of that stage safely. Already the adolescent *intelligentia* have ceased sleeping with *The Picture of Dorian Grey* beneath their pillows. The war has given them something else to think about and

growing industries have provided them with something better to do. Moreover, the reading folk of Russia have too much red blood in their veins, the history of their literature bears too many noble traditions for them to carry on these transient novels as indicative of Russian thought and literary ideals.

## CHAPTER X

### THE COLORS ON THE RUSSIAN PALETTE

UNTIL the middle of the 19th Century, art in Russia existed neither for Art's sake nor for Life's sake, as those two terms have been construed. It was very much a case of Art for God's sake. Like art elsewhere in Europe, it was a child of the Church, and even to this day certain phases of it directly or indirectly bear the stamp of the ecclesiastical heritage.

Naturally, not all art is so circumscribed. With the exception of one or two rare geniuses, Russian secular art has been the work of men who reflected the contemporary modes current in Europe. Ecclesiastical art is as it has been for generations. Religious art, a third phase, is developing apart from either. The colors on the ecclesiastical palette, then, are one thing; the colors on the religious palette are another, and those on the secular are still different.

Until Diaghileff came with his ballet and the Bakst settings, the average American knew little more of Russian art than Verestchagin, whose canvases, exhibited here in the '90's, caused a stir among artists and laymen alike. Perhaps it is unfortunate that our knowledge has been so limited, for there are hundreds of paintings worth knowing in the Tretykov Gallery in Moscow, in the Alexander III Museum in Petrograd

and in other galleries of that city. Verestschagin was a genius whose art knew the bounds of neither nationality nor period, and he is by far the greatest artist Russia has produced. His work bears no trace of nationalism; it was no more distinctively Russian than the work of a dozen other men. To say so would be as silly as saying that Turner was peculiarly English.

Art possesses a passport that carries it across all frontiers. It is a cosmopolitan element. Save in the extreme contrasting cases of Oriental and Occidental art, it can rarely be judged by nationality. It must be judged either on the basis of the individual genius and his followers, or the distinctive period.

Russian secular artists to-day are turning out practically the same sort of work that characterizes various schools in other parts of the Continent. It is in ecclesiastical art and in the art of the peasant industries that Russia stands alone.

## I

It is well to remember that in Russia churches are still built to the glory of God, and that the glory of God, as the Orthodox Church views it, is no cold, colorless intellectual conception. It is a matter of rich pigment and solid gold and priceless gems, years of devout labor and the expenditure of thousands of roubles. In short, the glory of God in Russia is very real and very tangible—and very costly.

The first form of art to make its appearance was the decoration of church walls with religious pictures whereby the faithful, who rarely could read, learned the story of the scriptures and were impressed with the

meaning of the dogma. The other form of ecclesiastical art was the *ikon* or portable sacred picture, which was originally used in connection with the early missionary efforts of the Church. The missionaries needed symbols of their teaching to show the heathen, and the *ikon* was to Kiev and Novgorod what the crucifix was to Rome and Canterbury. These *ikons* came to be used in the decoration of the Church itself, the ranging of them one above the other forming the *ikonostas* or screen between the congregation and the sanctuary. Around the *ikons* grew up the ecclesiastical art of Russia.

The Church has from the first shown an antipathy for graven images, because of the idols of the primitive Slavs. When Vladimir embraced Christianity there followed a wholesale destruction of images, although, in a few rare instances, religious workers continued to carve their figures. In the early part of the 17th Century statues were forbidden by the Patriarch Philaret, and later their use was further prohibited by an order issued in 1722. Wood carving from that time on became merely a decorative art restricted to the embellishment of the exterior of houses.

So it has come about that the *ikon* is a flat painting. The frame and the aureole for the saint's head may be as elaborate as one's desires and one's purse permits, but the painting itself must be flat. Of course a worshiper can be just as idolatrous in his devotions before a painting as he can before a graven image. This is a point that Orthodox apologists may well skip. It is immaterial anyhow.

The *ikon* is in every Orthodox home, shop, railroad station, theater, bathhouse and train, and even in houses



of ill-repute. You cannot travel or live in Russia without this constant reminder of the spiritual life. One pays due respect to the *ikon* on entering and leaving the house. It is kept in the corner—the *krazny ougle*, the beautiful corner—surrounded by tapers and lamps and other holy pictures and often by a collection of family photographs.<sup>1</sup> What the hearth is to our homes, the *krazny ougle* is to the Russian; there the family gathers; it is the beginning and end of the journey, the start and finish of work; it is the heart of the home.

Just as in the days when the Inquisition dictated the manner of painting the Virgin and made strict rulings on such details as the seemly covering of her feet, so was the manner of making *ikons* prescribed in the early days in Russia. The reason is not without its amusing logic. The Church considered it utterly presumptuous of a mere man to paint God—Whom he had not seen—after the whims of his own imagining. Hence the Church told him how it was to be done. Moreover, the artist had to be a devout man, neither a murderer, nor a drunkard, nor a liar, nor a ribald. Having fulfilled these personal qualifications and having proved that he possessed the gift for painting, he was permitted to set about his work.

“The painter selected a wooden panel the required size and shape. Next he grooved it out a little for the background, and fixed slats across the back to prevent its slitting. After this the panel was covered with a

<sup>1</sup> Every Russian at one stage of his life has a flair for being photographed. It is usually while the lad is doing his military service. For the two months preceding Easter the photographers of Russia are worked to death snapping these lads in their full-dress uniform and cocky airs. The photograph is then sent home for an Easter present and hung up in the *krazny ougle*, a reminder to the family not to forget the boy in their prayers.

kind of liquid glue, and over that was laid a cement, of which alabaster was a component part; it was then scraped smooth with a knife and polished with a rough, fibrous plant known as Horse-tail. At a later date the panel was occasionally covered with canvas, on which several layers of plaster were laid. The studios of the master ikonographers provided a few traditional models, and when it was desired to repeat one of these designs, its outline was painted over with a compound of dried garlic, Chinese ink and vermilion or other strong coloring matter; a sheet of dampened parchment or paper was pressed upon the surface of the model picture, and as soon as it had received the necessary impression, it was transferred to the prepared panel and rubbed over the back with a burnisher or polished stone. In the case of an original design, the painter sometimes drew it straight away upon the panel in pencil or Chinese ink. In the frescoes and larger pictures the outlines were scratched or grooved out with a pointed instrument, the process being called *grapheya*. The colors were thus kept distinct from each other. The trees and hills and other accessories of ikonographic landscape were put in first, then the robes, and last of all the faces. Finally, the picture was treated with an oily varnish called *alif*.”<sup>1</sup>

From time to time Russian artists have painted *ikons* in other fashions than the accepted mode, with varying degrees of success. Among the *moujiks*, however, there is a strong feeling that an *ikon* is ineffectual unless it is painted in the regulation, stereotyped style

<sup>1</sup> *The Russian Arts*. Rosa Newmarch. Pages 50-51. New York, 1915.

—the crude brush work and cruder drawing that characterized the Byzantine school.

The manufacture of these *ikons* now comprises one section of the peasant industries. It thrives especially in the Vladimir Government. Here *ikons* are made both for the Orthodox and for the Old Believers. The simpler kinds can be had for a few copecks; the prices range thence into the thousands and hundreds of thousands of roubles. These very costly and heavily jeweled types are generally found in the churches. The miracle working *ikon* of the Virgin of Vladimir in the Cathedral of the Assumption at Moscow, to quote one example, bears among its jewels a single emerald that alone is valued at \$50,000.

In addition to the painted *ikons* are those of brass, which can be occasionally picked up in our antique shops. They are either in a single panel or triptych ingeniously hinged to fold up into small compass. The figures are slightly raised and the background picked out with vari-colored enamels. The cruder work is generally characteristic of early Russian craftsmen, whereas those that show a finer technique can generally be classed as of Armenian manufacture. These small *ikons* are carried with one on a journey and, in the case of the smallest types, are worn about the neck much in the manner of a scapular.

## II

Ecclesiastical frescoes have always held a lively interest for Russia's artists. The earliest work was executed in mosaics after the fashion of Byzantium, but the demand for quicker and less expensive work and a

more workable medium called into use the painted mural.

Greek artists were responsible for much of the earliest work at Kiev—and fragments of it are still to be seen in the old cathedral there. When Novgorod in the north outstripped Kiev, Russian artists began to be employed in the decoration of the church walls. As in the matters of Church administration and dogma, so in the decoration of the edifices, the guiding influence of Byzantium was paramount up to the 13th Century. The drawing is crude and the color, while now toned down by time, has evidently been strong—bluish green and vermilion predominating.

By the 15th Century the religious artists began to draw away from Byzantium; the backgrounds of the frescoes executed at this time show Russian scenes and characters. This development was contemporary with the rise of Moscow and the evolution of the Russian state about that city. The greatest artist of the period was Roubliiev, whose decorations are still to be seen on the walls of the Cathedral of the Trinity in the Sergievo Monastery outside Moscow. For the most part, the work of this period was done by monks and in the course of a few generations it became a highly specialized art—one man painting the scenery, another the faces, a third the robes.

In the 16th and 17th Centuries this form of ikonography reached the highest point of its development. It had for patrons the wealthy family of Straganov, the Medicis of Russia, and it also was influenced by Dutch and Danish painters who introduced the idea of painting these church frescoes from life instead of making them repeat the accepted, stereotyped designs. The

stiff austerity of the figures began to pass away and the work showed signs of humanity and sympathy.

Of the later painters who have done striking church frescoes, Victor Vasnetsov and Michael Nesterov, his disciple, stand out above the rest. Both men have given a new impetus to this form of ecclesiastical art and under their influence it would seem to have begun a new development. To their names can be added the name of Vrubel because of his *ikons* for the Kirilov Monastery, in which his studies of the Byzantine modes are evident.

We can say with assurance that ecclesiastical art in Russia will be a vital part of her artistic development, because so long as the Church enjoys the support of the Government and of the majority of the people, it will be in a position to foster this specialized but important side of Russian art and to keep it distinctively Russian.

I have spoken at length of ecclesiastical art for the simple reason that I sincerely believe that it, the peasant industries, the folk music and the dance are the four phases of artistic expression which are showing any national individuality in Russia to-day. Distinction of style unquestionably abounds, so does personal individuality, but, the critics to the contrary, it is a debatable point whether one can point to the work of any school in the past century or the present and say, "That is Russian. That expresses the Russian spirit and exhibits the Russian viewpoint on life. That shows the East-and-Westness of the race."

Consider the architecture of Russian cities, for example. The first thing the traveler is struck with in Petrograd and even in Moscow is the prevalence of

the Classical designs. With few exceptions the architecture of Russia during the past three centuries has been French and Italian. This applies not alone to palaces, public buildings and theaters, but to the *datcha*, the country house, as well. In ecclesiastical architecture Russia presents unquestioned individuality. The Byzantine modes are still strong, and save for such examples as St. Isaac's Cathedral and the Kazan Cathedral at Petrograd and the Church of St. Andrew at Kronstadt, the influence of Continental architecture did not penetrate into ecclesiastical building.

The one exception I would make to this denial of the existence of a distinctly individualistic and national school of Russian art is in book-illustrating. In this we find art registering the economic interests of a cultured people. During the Slavophil days of the past century and afterward, an awakening interest in national folklore spread over Russia. In our time it finds expression in the Russia Ballet and in the Bakst settings. It also found expression in illustrations for books of fairy stories and the *bylinas* or hero ballads. In the work of Bihbin, Miss Polyenov, Davydov and Korovin, to name only a few, traces of nationalism are evident.

### III

The colors on the peasant's palette are crude. The *moujik* has a passion for lively colors.<sup>1</sup> He wears a bright-red blouse, he paints his furniture, his spoons, his walls; his women-folk embroider their dresses in

<sup>1</sup> In the peasant's argot, *precrasny*—"very red"—means "very beautiful."

all the colors of the rainbow. This penchant for elemental colors is strong and primitive and healthy. There is no pose about it. The peasant likes strong color for the same reason that he likes strong drink—he is an extremist.

In the ingenuity of the carved and painted peasant toys, in the colors of their embroideries, in the intricacy of their native jewelry and the honest crudeness of their pottery one finds virile craftsmanship unspoiled as yet by too flattering a popularity.

In their cleverness of construction and keenness of caricature, the toys especially show a remarkable heritage from the East. There are the dolls that fit one into another, the "pull" toys—you pull a stick and the figures on it move with amazing realism—and the carved and turned games and knickknacks that are found in every Russian household.

On my desk is a varied assortment—a late Christmas gift from a Russian friend. Here is a little wooden mushroom, no bigger than a walnut. Slip off the top and out tumbles a jackstraw game, a complete tea-set—samovar, cups, saucers, goblets, cordial bottles, pitchers, not one over a quarter of an inch high, yet each is perfect in every detail. They have been turned on a lathe. Imagine the skill and patience of the *koustar* who made them.

Another toy is of the "pull" variety. A stick of wood with a pull rod run through it holds the figure of an old woman dragging a squalling youth by the hand. Pull the rod and Disobedient Ivan precipitately approaches the inevitable switching. Of the same character is the old *moujik* plowing. There is the broken-down, sad-eyed horse, the aged farmer with his

gnarled hands clasped about the handle of the rude *shosha*—the native plow—and the reins thrown about his shoulders. Each time you pull the rod old Serge drives the coulter deep.

In addition to these are several varieties of crows—crows carved and painted, crows carved and stained. The crow is the lucky bird of Russia.

Travel eastward through the Russian Empire and search out the native bazaars in the obscure towns, and toys such as these will be found. Their counterparts are also to be picked up in native Chinese and Japanese shops—that is, the shops which do not specialize in German-made tourist knickknacks. It would seem that the toy-makers of Russia learned their art more from their eastern neighbors and Tartar progenitors than from the Teutonic masters of toys.

Of late years, since the Government has been fostering the handicrafts, some remarkably beautiful furniture has been created in the Moscow *kustarny* trade-schools. It is heavy of line and cumbersome, but relieved by intricate carving of conventionalized native designs. Some of it is painted after the peasant manner; most of it, however, is simply stained and oiled, the carving being sufficiently decorative in itself.

In these products can be read the promise of a distinctive art that may be continued when life in Russia has again assumed normal proportions. It is different from the alleged peasant furniture that Vienna or Berlin has produced, resembling rather the Scandinavian native furniture. If its manufacture is developed into a paying industry, it may result in the creation of distinctive interiors in Russian homes. The interior of the average Russian home is still a sad copy of the worst



days of the French gilt, crimson and scroll atrocities, and anything that will relieve the condition will be a cause for thanksgiving.

## IV

In considering the broad aspects of Russian art it is not irrelevant to note the fact that the intellectual classes are deeply interested in its progress and productions. The cultured Russian, like his brother of the *moujik* class, is an extremist; when he is cultured he is very cultured, his knowledge and interests are catholic. He is keenly alive to what is being done in art and literature and music the world over, and he appreciates the potentialities of his own people. Art in Russia does not want for popular interest and support, nor for the support of the aristocracy and the royal family. Ever since the time of Peter the Great the Tsar has been the patron of the arts and it has been due to royal assistance and interest that many of Russia's greatest artists have been able to succeed.

Previous to the war—and it is even more so since the war has given the Empire a solidarity—the cultured people have been fostering all forms of art and handicraft which are distinctly national. While at times the effort has been grotesquely a pose, there is a lively and very sincere interest in the artistic potentialities of the peoples of the Empire. We, on the other side of the world, have only seen snatches of this, but what we have seen has awakened unwonted enthusiasm. Unquestionably, Russia has something important and vital to say to the world of art, just as she has had something important and vital to say to the world of music. In that day when her voice reaches us, we will understand!

## CHAPTER XI

### WHEN RUSSIA SINGS

ONE does not ordinarily look upon the Russians as a happy people. Assemble the composite Russ from the pictures given of him in Russian novels, in popular legends and in newspaper reports, and he "stacks up" a dour, sodden fellow with a political chip on his shoulder, a vodka bottle in one hand and a bomb in the other. Or, if that would seem too much of a caricature, he might be pictured as a rather large, lethargic, square-bearded gentleman in furs, who suffers from some strange pornial passion and a weakness for gambling. It is indeed difficult for the outside world to adjust itself to the realization that these Russians and all their brothers are a lively race— that Russia really does sing.

When the Russian Ballet was presented to American audiences, when American choirmasters discovered the singular spiritual quality of Russian church music and performed it for American congregations, when the various symphony leaders and opera managers presented the works of Russian composers, America was afforded a glimpse of Russia just as genuine and sincere as that given by the pages of Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and Gorky. Contrasts as they are, the two propound the strange paradox of the Russian tempera-

ment, and point out the wisdom of refusing to judge Russia and the Russians solely by one expression of the national genus. For the same Russ who weeps also sings; the same folk who would seem to be utterly paralyzed in will dance with a fervor and grace rarely found in other lands.

The Russians are as instinctively musical as the Germans, and, striking an average, their folk music—the spontaneous music of the race—is lighter in touch and more cheery in tone. By birth, Russia is a singing nation, a dancing nation. Make no mistake about that.

The traveler to Russia soon discovers this pleasant truth, and the recollections of the spontaneous music of the people can never be forgotten. . . . There was that first morning in Petersburg years back, when we were awakened by singing and rushed to the window to see four huge privates tramping down the Prospekt singing—simply singing to keep in step. . . . Then there were the songs the emigrants used to sing on the train going to Tcheliabinsk and the Russian Land of Promise, the queer yapping songs that they accompanied with *balalaïka* and accordion. . . . And the funeral in the little Shilka hamlet on a cold March morning when the farmer choir sang with a devout fervor and beauty that paled into insignificance memories of the gilded glory of the Imperial Chapel Choir. . . . And the Cossack hymns to the Virgin that used to float down breeze in the wan twilights after the boom of the sunset gun from the barracks around the bend had ricocheted through the cleft of the stark, gaunt hills and died down across the stretches of purple snow and the jagged, ice-choked Amur.

## I

All Russia sings. No nation under the sun has such a body of folk songs, and none possesses such variety. From arctic Russia in the north to the Caucasus, from the Ukraine to the Far East provinces, the people sing, and sing spontaneously. The extent of this territory with its diversity of climates and peoples has led to confusion by those who know Russian folk songs only superficially and judge them all of one sort—the sad lamentations and the melancholy love ballads.

Like the people who make and sing them, folk songs are products of environment. To be sure, the subject matter may be national or a local adaptation of a racial theme, but the nature of the melodies themselves, the quality of their tunes and rhythm are all deeply affected by climate and natural surroundings. Thus, the songs of Scotland differ from the folk songs of Kent and Surrey. The former are more melancholy, they reflect the environment of the north. The same is true of the folk songs of the north of Russia, whereas the songs of the Ukraine, the Crimea and the Caucasus are quite different. In Great Russia the ballads celebrate courage, daring and orgy, but in the Dnieper Valley the songs reflect the kindliness of nature—they are about the grass, the trees, the stars and man's communion with them. It is rather unfortunate in this respect that Russia has been so much alluded to as the Empire of the North, for she is also an empire of the South and of the East, and in classifying her native ballads one must not forget her more pleasant climes that have produced a laughing people and their laughing songs.

Another phase of folk songs in Russia is that the more clement regions have produced a greater body of ballads than the less kindly. While this is undoubtedly due to the natural increase or decrease of population according to climates, it cannot be questioned that singing Nature produces a singing people. The Ukraine, for example, supplies an appreciable majority of the Russian peasant songs as well as most of the Empire's finest singers. From the Ukraine were chosen the first members of the Imperial Chapel Choir, and ever since Little Russia has contributed the majority of the choristers.

As in other nations, the first music was the music of the epic songs and the ceremonial ballads. The former are called in Russia *bylinas*,<sup>1</sup> the main groups being the Vladimir Cycle of Kiev, the Novgorod Cycle and the Moscow or Imperial Cycle. Later *bylinas* recount the glories of Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great and even subsequent personages. These songs, although corrupted and combined with others in the course of mouth-to-mouth transmission, were brought into existence by definite historic facts and events. The ceremonial songs, on the other hand, were inherited from the heathen days and were preserved for certain special occasions. Although the heathen customs were taken over by the Church and the old festivals merged into Church holy days, the ceremonial songs still retained their place in the hearts of the people. In time they lost their purely ceremonial nature and became part of the everyday songs of the countryside. The Church has always seemed to fear an evil result from

<sup>1</sup> An excellent translation of these *bylinas* has been made by Isabel Florence Hapgood under the title of *The Epic Songs of Russia*. New York, 1886, 1916.

the singing of such folk ballads, and even as late as the early 19th Century carried on a persistent and senseless warfare against them. In spite of this many exist to this day and on them have been founded much of modern Russian music. While the last few years have witnessed a revival of interest in the *bylinas*, only in one region of the empire are they still sung in the old fashion—in the remote swamp of the Olonetz Government in the extreme northeast.

The ancient manner of singing these folk songs was not unlike that which obtained in other countries during the Middle Ages, and since Russia has developed slower than the rest of the Continent, there are still to be found remnants of the ancient customs. Itinerant psalm singers, *Kalyeky Perekozhie*, are to be found on the highways and at the shrines, performing their *stiks* or religious ballads. In his collection<sup>1</sup> of folk songs Rimsky-Korsakov has preserved their "Greeting." There were, in addition, the nursery rhymes and jingles, the lullabies, the workmen's songs, the epic songs sung by wandering mummers and minstrels at the houses of the *boyars*, the songs of seed planting and harvest, the winter ballads and the ballads of spring.

The musical nature of these songs has been described by César Cui: "Russian folk songs are generally written within a very restricted compass, and only rarely move beyond the interval of a fifth or sixth. The older the song, the narrower is the range of its compass. The theme is always short, sometimes extending no farther

<sup>1</sup> The earliest collection of folk songs was made by Pratch, a musician from Prague in 1790. It contained 149 songs. Balakirev in 1866 brought out a collection of 46, and later Rimsky-Korsakov produced his collection of 100. Since that time there have been innumerable collections. Any music store carries at least one or two in stock.

than two bars, but these two bars are repeated as often as the exigencies of the text demand.

"The folk songs are sung either by a single voice or by a chorus. In the latter case, a single voice leads off with the subject, and then the chorus takes it up.<sup>1</sup> The harmonization of these tunes is traditional and extremely original. The different voices of the chorus approach each other until they form a unison, or else separate into chords (only the chords are often not filled in), and, generally speaking, a melody treated polyphonically ends in a unison.

"The songs for a single voice are frequently accompanied on a stringed instrument called a *balalaika*—a kind of guitar with a triangular belly, the strings of which are either plucked or set vibrating by a glissando. As to the songs for chorus they are rarely provided with an accompaniment; when they do have one, it is played on a sort of oboe, which uses the melody as the basis of a number of contrapuntal improvisations which are, no doubt, not much in accordance with the strict rules of music, but are exceedingly picturesque.<sup>2</sup>

✓ "Russian folk songs may be classified in the following ways: singing games, or songs sung on feast days to the accompaniment of different games and dances; songs of special occasions, of which the wedding song is the most popular type; street songs, or serenades for chorus of a jovial or burlesque character; songs of the

<sup>1</sup> The parallel to this form of singing is found in the recitation of the choir offices. The leader of the peasant song—really a precentor—strikes up the theme, the *zapievokya*, and the others join in with the *podgolossly* or free imitations of the theme. R. W.

<sup>2</sup> At present the accordion and even the mouth organ and the Jew's harp are used by the peasant for accompanying songs and dances; in fact, the accordion is even more seen than the *balalaika* since it requires less skill of the performer. R. W.

*bourlaks* or of the barge-haulers; and songs for a single voice of every sort and kind."

The revival of interest in folk songs in Russia has been steadily growing in the past fifty years. Up to the middle of the last century the cityward movement had not become a factor in the life of the countryside, and the majority of the folk songs were as yet uncorrupted by the street ballads of a lower order. It is perhaps fortunate for Russia that at this time the *V Narodny* Movement, taken up by the *intelligentia*, directed its efforts among other things to a preservation of the old country ballads in some permanent form for posterity. Professor Wiener in his *An Interpretation of the Russian People* makes an interesting claim apropos of this interest in folk ballads. He states that its source was American, that Sokalski, having heard our negro songs while living in this country, returned to Russia resolved to collect and preserve the songs of the *moujiks*.

From these plebeian sources Russian music has worked its way up to the plane of its finest compositions. In fact, the School of Russian music owes its individuality to this body of folk formulas and to their peculiar character in harmony.

## II

The early Church music, like all things connected with Russian Christianity, was inherited from Byzantium and later was crossed with Greek influence, an influence still apparent today.

St. John of Damascus, who lived in the 8th Century, was the first to systematize the Church music. He



wrote many of the hymns sung today in the Russian, Roman and Anglican Churches, and it was due to his efforts that the Russian Choir offices were standardized.

Ever since the 15th Century the Russian court has maintained a royal chapel choir, and to this day in the choir of the Imperial Chapel one can hear choral singing equaled nowhere else in the world. The voices are all male—men and boys whose lives are devoted solely to this religious service. Ivan the Terrible, fearsome though his repute, was a patron of this choir and is said to have composed several sets of music for the Church services. Later came men such as Berayovsky (1745-1777) and Bortniansky (1751-1825), the latter rated as the Russian Palestrina, whose labors were devoted to the development of the Church music. Since that time practically every Russian musician has composed some music for the Church. It is, of course, purely choral without instrumental accompaniment, since no instruments are permitted in the Orthodox Church service. Some of it is wonderfully simple; other compositions have essayed stupendous arrangements for no less than twenty-four voice parts.

### III

Until the early 17th Century, Russian music was restricted to these two classes—folk songs and Church music. In the reign of Tsar Alexis Mikailovich (1645-1676) some morality plays with incidental music were presented under royal patronage. This might be termed the beginning of Russian secular music. Peter the Great organized the first body of musicians and ever since those times music in Russia has had the

loyal support of the royal family.<sup>1</sup> Under the Empresses Ann, Elizabeth and Catherine II and the Tsars Paul I and Alexander I, everything was done to foster and disseminate Russian music and music in general. Native artists were generously supported in their work, and foreign artists were invited to Russia, where they were kept by the court and paid large salaries to compose and perform music for the delectation of both the upper classes and the common people. Under these alien musicians a great body of music was composed—operas, symphonies and chamber music—but it was not until Glinka wrote his “A Life for the Tsar” (1836) that there was manifested in Russian music the striking national individuality which has ever since characterized it.

Glinka's opera completely revolutionized Russian music. Instead of following Continental modes and themes, he turned to his own native land for inspiration. “Not only the subject, but the music, too, is to be Russian,” he said, speaking of this opera as he wrote it. He was the first to introduce the Russian folk songs into a composition in their native manner and construction, and in that lies much of the mobility and individuality of the opera and of the work of the men who followed after. As Cui stated, “Glinka has created a fully equipped Russian school of opera. ‘A Life for the Tsar’ was born in full armor, like Minerva,

<sup>1</sup> Peter is said to have issued an imperial ukase suggesting that the people have music with their meals, since music had a refining influence! In his characteristic Rooseveltian manner he also issued imperial “invitations” to the people to attend the theater—and perhaps for the same reason. The Empress Elizabeth exhibited some of the same lusty and intolerant support of music. It is said that she imposed a fine of fifty roubles on every guest who failed to attend her court concerts.

and its author from the very first moment found a place amongst the greatest composers." The reward for this labor was Glinka's appointment as Choral Director of the Imperial Chapel, one of the highest musical honors Russia has to confer. With his name starts the Russian School of Music, a school as distinctive as the French and of far greater possibilities, as its development has shown.

The second great step in the development of the Russian school was the forming of the *Moguchaya Kiuchka* or "The Mighty Group"; in the vernacular, "The Big Five"—César Cui, Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin, Balakirev, and Moussorgsky. It was a group of young men, of which Cui was the mouthpiece, that had exalted ideas of its own talents and ambitions, and completely scorned men of the caliber of Rubinstein and Tchaikovsky. Like all young reformers, they were iconoclasts, and with the peculiar fervor of youth they made themselves so well known through their propaganda that they are not to be overlooked in even this brief sketch of Russian development. They had a marked penchant for the recitative in operatic music that became a veritable weakness with them. They proclaimed that "operatic music ought always to have an intrinsic value, as absolute music, apart from the text," that operatic ought in itself to be true, beautiful music. Working along these lines, they strove to revolutionize the Russian opera, a reform as radical as Wagner effected in Germany.

Both the operatic and orchestral music of this group is, by this time, well known to American audiences, and the limitations of the work of each of the five men have been matter for current periodical comment. Despite

their insistent methods, despite the contempt they showed for those who would not agree with them, they carried on the heritage of Russian music and found ample inspiration in the folk songs of their native land. Some of it was not strictly Slavic—some was distinctly Oriental and Persian, as in the case of certain composition of Rimsky-Korsakov and Moussorgsky. Here again the vast extent of the Russian Empire must be taken into account, for while the folk songs of the three ethnological groups of Russia—Little, Great and White—comprise the essential basis of the inspiration of Russian music, it is just as legitimate to include inspiration caught from the peoples on the outer fringes of the empire. Even Glinka in his opera, "Russlan and Lioudmilla," used Tartar, Arab and Persian dance themes.

Coincident with "The Big Five" were two composers whose works have lifted the Russian School to a place justly preëminent. The years have taken no toll of Tchaikovsky and Rubinstein, and when the works of the noisy reformers shall have been forgotten, these two will remain favorites with audiences the world over.

Rubinstein and Tchaikovsky were not theorists; they had no musical axes to grind; they were simply supreme geniuses who placed their mark on all branches of Russian music and left it nobler for their efforts.

Rubinstein was as much a giant in creation as he was a giant in the flesh, a composer of the highest order and one of the unquestionably great virtuosos of the 19th Century. His tours about the world took the nature of a triumphal progress, and those who heard him can never forget the man's prodigious vitality and

his supreme technique. Like any great genius he lacked neither champions nor critics. Even in Russia, the Young School of the fervid "Five" attacked him at every opportunity because he refused to break with the traditions of the past. In other countries as well he aroused storms of comment from those who set about to judge him—all of which, of course, greatly amused Rubinstein. Writing about this to a friend he said: "The Jews consider me a Christian, the Christians a Jew; the Classics call me a Wagnerian, the Wagnerians a Classic; the Russians say I am a German, the Germans say I am a Russian." The Germans were the closest to the truth, for whatever trace of foreign influence is found in Rubinstein's work, it was preëminently Russian and was permeated with true Russian coloring. Moreover, through his efforts, Russian music became known to the world and the first Russian Conservatory of Music was founded.

Equally criticized but less indifferent to it was Rubinstein's contemporary, Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky, a composer of extraordinary fertility in all forms of music. In America he is better known for his symphonies and chamber music than for his operas, and an all-Tchaikovsky program invariably means a crowded house and an enthusiastic audience.

The beginnings of Tchaikovsky's career show strong alien influence (in his chamber music especially he manifested the inspiration of Liszt) but in the course of time he developed his own distinct personality. While he availed himself time and again of Russian folk themes, as, for example, in the Second Symphony, he cannot be said to have depended wholly upon them for his inspiration. He had a distinct leaning toward

the warmer, more sensuous music of Italy, and he regarded the presence of Italian influence in his work as one of the secrets of its quick appeal. However many themes he borrowed from his native land, he invariably clothed them in the richness of the South. Both the Pathetic Symphony, No. 6, and No. 7 are expressions of the luxuriousness of sorrow. The same element will be found in his songs, of which he wrote a great number; the sentiment in them is the sentiment of the South—a *trieste* sentiment, sincere and overwhelming but reserved in some respects; quite a contrast to German sentiment which is a bit sloppy and bourgeois. Traces of the same sort of feeling can be found in the south of Russia—in the more clement climates. A regal realism, an aristocratic sorrow, a rich, mauve sentiment—these are the things which characterize the work of Tchaikovsky. A reflection of his life? Doubtless, for he lived in a world of extreme heights and depths, for the most part self-created, but none the less genuine.

Whereas Rubinstein was a lusty poet who happened to find expression in music, Tchaikovsky was a delicately adjusted musician whose depth of feeling could be expressed only in the fine nuances of tone and rhythm.

#### IV

When the Russian Ballet was presented, in both New York and Boston it was subjected to police censorship. The apparently inartistic and Puritanical attitude of the law aroused great indignation from those who saw in this suppression Art "crucified on the hill of intolerance." . . .

But here and there in Russia the peasants will point out to you stone circles, and explain that they are the petrified bodies of young women who danced the native Whitsun dances so demonstratively and with such a showing of ankles that the spirits of the forest, the *roussalki*, caught them in their sin and turned them to stone!

- ✓ For a matter of fact, the native dances of the people, with the exception of the wild Cossack dance, the *Kazachok*, and the September "Dance of the Beer Brewing," are simple movements, scarcely pronounced and with little demonstration. The wild dances are restricted to men; and a dance that requires more than the raising of the foot slightly from the ground is considered too indecent for any self-respecting peasant woman to join.<sup>1</sup>

It is well to remember this fact in judging the Russian ballet. However much it may lay claim to the inspiration of the peasant dances, the later forms of the ballet as interpreted by Nijinsky and Pavlowa are the product of a Russian school of dancing rather than the product of the people. In its development it has gone far from its source. Acceding to the demand for exotic color, form and rhythm, it has long since passed from the original phases. It has taken music not intended for choreographic purposes and set to it a gorgeous scenic display and corrupted forms of the old folk formulas. In short, the modern Russian ballet as it can be seen in New York, London, Paris and even Moscow and Petrograd is not a dance of the people; it is a development of the Russian school of

<sup>1</sup> Apropos of this the folk songs are equally decorous. Of the thousands of peasant ballads, there are few indeed that would make a girl blush.

dancing that in the past found its source in the folk games of the masses.

These games, as I have said, are very simple, decorous and quiet. The older girls usually take part, with the men furnishing music from an accordion or *balalaïka*. They celebrate the wedding feast, the coming of spring, the sowing of the seed, the garnering of the harvest, and in some instances the old heathen legends which are part and parcel of *moujik* folk lore. The capering and horse play that characterized the English morris dances in Tudor days, the sophistication that accompanies their revival, and the indiscriminate mingling of the sexes—these things are quite unknown in the *moujik* dancing games. The general movements of the dances are not unlike those of our old-fashioned cotillions; the girls group themselves into two lines, facing each other, turn about, beat time with their heels, turn around again, sing the accompaniment songs. There is scarcely any gesture, and the foot simply trips along the ground. These are the movements that characterize the *Khorovad*, danced during the first week after Easter to celebrate the return of spring, the *Trepak*, the *Kamarinskaya*, the *Golouverts* (the Dance of the Doves) and the Cuckoo Dance—the most famous of the peasant games.

## v

For over 300 years the ballet has been a distinctive phase of higher Russian life. As early as 1675 ballets were presented before the court, and in his reign Peter the Great, with characteristic insistence on Western culture, gave the ballet his hearty imperial sanction.



Italian and French ballet masters were imported under the Empress Ann, and a Ballet Academy came into being as a branch of the Government, which it has remained ever since.

To a stranger this paternal fostering of the arts by the Russian Government is a situation difficult to understand. . . . In Yakutsk, in the hinterlands of the Empire where the Tsar owns great stretches of gold fields, a miner rocks his cradle in an icy stream and watches for the yellow dust. As he gathers up the precious sand, part of it is laid aside for the Tsar, and in turn the Tsar's privy treasurer pays it out in tuition for the Nijinskys and Mordkins, the Pavlowas and Lopoukawas that you and I witness from comfortable seats in our theaters.

For the Imperial Ballet is as much a part of the Russian Government as the army, and with even greater care than is exercised in selecting her soldiers does Russia select her dancers. They are fed, clothed, taught and cared for with a jealousy that indeed few children in the Empire know. Their little bodies and minds are regularly and tirelessly trained for the great art they are eventually to practice. When they have finished their course they become part of the regular ballets. In return for this work they receive a modest salary, the guarantee of an honorable living and a place in the society of their world, and a pension when their dancing days are over. Whenever a member of the Imperial Ballet leaves Russia he must receive Government sanction, and he is permitted to remain abroad only for a stated period. Some of the artists have chosen to forfeit their pensions and positions with the Government for the prospect of larger salaries in other

lands, but the majority of the artists return at the end of their furlough to delight the people of the land which makes their art possible.

There are two branches of the ballet at the two Imperial opera houses—the Mariansky Theater in Petrograd and the Opera House in Moscow. At both these theaters ballet pantomimes are presented on an average of twice a week and are well attended by all classes.

The revolt against the stiff Classical ballet was first begun by the Imperial Russian Academy, and due to its efforts the more Romantic form of pantomime dancing has come into vogue and into a permanent position in the arts. Inspiration was first caught from the dancing of Isadora Duncan and the new school, cordially welcomed by the Director of the Ballet, M. Fokine, was fostered by the growing lack of interest in the classical forms. It was a spontaneous movement on the part of the artists themselves, and was received with equal spontaneity by Russian audiences and artists of other crafts. Musicians and scenic artists joined the movement and threw their efforts into the work—Rimsky-Korsakov, Glazounov, Bakst and a host of others. Rich material was found within the bounds of the Russian Empire, in the legends of old Moscovy, in Persia, in the Caucasus, in Siberia, and in the lore of the Cossacks. Like the Russian School of Music, the Russian School of Dancing was born in full armor. Little wonder that it captured the world! For no one nation has ever made so great a contribution to the choreographic arts and no form of dancing has been so readily accepted by the discerning world.

In her schools of music and dancing Russia has an-

swered, as no amount of denial could, the charge of barbarism. The taunt flung at Russia by her enemies has been flung back in two noble expressions, expressions far nobler than the world has hitherto seen. "The bear that walks like a man" has turned out to be a man that dances like a satyr and a maid that flutters like a swan!

In accepting these two forms of art in Russia the world has acknowledged a great spiritual fact about Russia, it has come to a realization that in no country is art more pure and more unfettered. The musical successors of Rubinstein and Tchaikovsky and the *Moguchaka Kiuchka*, as well as the dancers now training to be the Nijinskys and Pavlowas of a new generation, are nobly carrying on the old traditions. In their own land they find ample inspiration to perpetuate these pure arts so generously given the world.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE RUSSIAN LAND OF PROMISE

**R**USSIA did not possess a Horace Greeley to bid her young men "go West." The "West" of Russia lies to the eastward, beyond the Urals; and the young men who first went there were not consulted on their destinies. They went—that was all. And because so many went the way of exile in those 400 years, and because their sufferings were untold and their sacrifices indescribable, Siberia today bears the worst name of any region in the world. For generations it was a pariah land, a prison land. To hundreds it still is. As one authority aptly phrased it, "Siberia is at once Russia's reservoir and its cesspool."

Today, Siberia is Russia's Land of Promise.

#### I

Visualize a territory greater in breadth than this continent, but in about the same geographical position as that occupied by Canada and the northern part of the United States—to a line drawn west from Savannah. In the extreme north, picture an arctic waste; south of that, a wide timber belt; still further south and 400 miles wide—between latitudes 55° and 57°—a black soil belt, with soil as black as that in Michigan;

below that, reaches of prairie land tailing off to desert and salt lakes.

Conceive a chain of low hills running north and south along the Atlantic seaboard, nearer than the Alleghanies, for Siberia does not start officially until one has gone 100 miles east of the Urals. About where Yellowstone National Park lies, locate a great inland sea and call it Lake Baikal. Due south from it sketch in a cluster of mountains, to be labeled the Altai.

At about Louisville, Kentucky, start a river, run it north and call it the Irtish. At Kansas City start another, flow it north and call it the Tom. Let them meet at a point about where Sault Ste. Marie lies, and name the river thence to the Arctic the Obi. About at Denver start a fourth river and let it wander to the Arctic under the name of Yenesei. A little east of where you have placed Lake Baikal start a river and let it curve to the east and north, emptying in the Pacific north of where Vancouver stands. This is the Amur. Midway north of it, in the region of Calgary, Alberta, begin a sixth great river system and name it the Lena.

You now have a rough conception of both the geographical belts and the larger waterways. All the rivers either flow north directly or eventually flow in that direction. The Irtish, Tom and Yenesei drain prairie lands in the south, wheat lands in the middle course and timber lands in the northern reaches. The Amur, flowing for the greater part of its course in an eastward direction, drains a valley rich in wheat soil and minerals. The Lena is banked with alluvial gold fields.

Conceive this region as it was 400 years ago, in-

habited only by nomadic tribes with much the same mixture of peaceful and warpath habits as our American Indians. Visualize a band of freebooting Cossacks trickling over the Urals, fighting their way through forest and over prairie, 5000 miles eastward to the Great Ocean. See, then, a thin road thread its way from the Urals to the Pacific. Mark it here and there with little stockaded forts. Watch the people who come east on that road—courtiers, dissenters, nobles, murderers, thieves, a handful of settlers.

About where Pittsburg is, place a dot and call it Tcheliabinsk. Where Cleveland lies locate another and call it Omsk; about at Chicago find another to be called Tomsk; at Gardiner, Montana, locate Irkutsk; and about where the northern boundary-line of California bleeds off into the Pacific, place Vladivostok.

Brush away 400 years and run a double-tracked railroad due east from the Urals to the Pacific: the Trans-Siberian. Draw another along the course of the Amur to the Pacific and then south to Vladivostok: the Amur Railway.

During 1916 there were opened for traffic three new lines, as follows:

*The Altai Railway:* The line is 514 miles in length and runs from Novo-Nicolaievsk to Semipalatinsk, a trade center on the upper Irtysh River, connecting the fertile regions in the foot-hills of the Altai with the mineral lands farther on. As yet the Altai gold and silver deposits have been poorly worked, since machinery and the means of transporting it are both lacking. For example, there are over 3000 silver deposits known and surveyed in the Altai of which less than 30 have

been worked. The same situation obtains in the case of the working of reef gold and other minerals.

*The Kulundin Railway:* a line serving the region between the Altai Railroad and the Irtysh River. It runs south from Tartarsky on the Trans-Siberian 120 miles east of Omsk, and drops south to Slavgorod, 200 miles. This is the first line to tap the steppes of the western governments. It runs through fertile grazing and wheat lands.

*The Kolchugino Railway:* designed to tap the Kuznetsk coal fields, the richest of all Russian coal deposits, lying south of the Trans-Siberian R. R. about 300 miles from where Tomsk is situated.

In addition, there has been completed and opened during the past five years the new northern main line of the Trans-Siberian running from Petrograd to Tumen and south to Omsk and an extension from Ekaterinburg to Kurgan on the Trans-Siberian, lines that tap the resources of the northwestern steppes.

There, roughly, is an idea of the basis on which the Russian Land of Promise is developing. Gone is the old picture of snow and ice and fettered exiles and hungry wolves. . . . The Trans-Siberian express even carries a gymnasium car in which travelers can find sufficient exercise to keep them fit during the twelve-day journey across Asia. Up on the Amur at Blagowestchensk, you buy shoes made in Brockton, Mass., from a clerk who remembers "Little Ol' Broadway" and pines for Herald Square. The farmers thereabouts use American plows and harvesters, and the woman who cannot afford a Singer Sewing Machine is in a poor way.

To this regenerate land between 1890, when the Trans-Siberian was being built, and 1900, went no

less than 2,000,000 souls. In 1908 the figure for the year reached 758,000. In 1913—the latest figures available—a cool million of them crossed the Urals and threw in their lot with the alleged wastes of snow and ice.

And here lies the answer to the situation we saw in the statistics for emigration quoted in Chapter III. When the Russian wants to find a new land and a new life he goes to Siberia. From the handful of Cossacks has grown up a population of 11,500,000, nine millions of which are settled on the steppes of Western Siberia. The native tribes that used to wander about the vast regions pillaging and snatching their food where they could find it, are now out-numbered eight to one. Siberia has ceased being a cesspool and has become a mighty reservoir.

## II

In the short space of a chapter it is difficult to condense all the facts about a region one and a half times as large as the United States. I have done it at length elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> Here we can only touch on the most salient features of the country and sketch the broad lines of its development.

First, we must rid ourselves of the idea that Siberia is a gigantic, wolf-ridden, ice-locked prison-house. To be sure, during the war Russia has shipped her captives to Siberia where they stay with scarcely any guarding, the legends about the place being enough to prevent the men from straying far away from camp. In a

<sup>1</sup> *Through Siberia, an Empire in the Making*. Written with Bassett Digby. New York, 1912.



military respect alone Siberia is a prison land. She has her own jails where she takes care of her own criminals, and in the north are exile stations where men condemned for life are interned, but as a general dumping ground for the criminal output of All the Russias, Siberia has long since resigned the post.

In 1900 the good folk got together and made it very plain to those in authority at Petersburg that they didn't intend permitting their land to be made the world's largest jail. They had other plans for it. Since that day no criminal exiles have been shipped to Siberia and, save for the deportations consequent on the Revolution of 1905, comparatively few administrative exiles. In fact, most of the administrative exiles whose terms had not elapsed at the beginning of the war were permitted to return to Russia, and many of them have already laid down their lives for the very government against which they revolted; many are still to be found in the trenches, in the hospitals and on the trains doing yeoman's service.

In all fairness to the facts, it must be acknowledged that Siberia is better off to-day for its 400 years' harboring of political exiles, despite the hosts of criminals who also were shipped there. Imagine what would be the status of the population, if for 400 years we had sent into permanent residence west of the Mississippi, one-tenth of our best intellectual and cultured men and women, together with the riff-raff of our towns and cities. Siberia to-day bears the traces of those exiles—more of the intellectual than the criminal. In a measure this is what has given Siberia its forward-looking spirit.

The picture of eternal snow and ice is likewise an

exaggeration. The climate of Siberia, or, to be more precise, the climates of Siberia are approximately the same as the climates of the same comparative belts in America. The temperature, however, runs to extremes. Along the black soil belt, for example, the thermometer will drop to  $30^{\circ}$  below in January and rise to the dizzy height of  $115^{\circ}$  above in August. In this region spring and autumn scarcely exist. Two weeks after the snow had melted I used to walk mile on mile across the steppes and through the *taiga* (virgin forests) with the iris up to my knees, the fields and woods purpling with them as far as the eye could reach. In Siberia the cold is a very dry cold, comparable to that in our Dakotas, and is often accompanied by winds. In summer the same winds drive dust storms that make country roads and many city streets almost impassable. Against such emergencies the city streets are regularly sprinkled. This last fact may seem irrelevant; I mention it merely because it sounds so delightfully incongruous with Siberia.

A third point to remember is that the Siberian is very much up and coming. He stands in relation to the Russian somewhat as the Westerner does to us—a bit quicker in step, more liberal and brisk in thought, personally ambitious and independent. In Siberia they do not ask you who your grandfather was or what he did—for obvious reasons. Each man is much on his own, and even the police there seem to have respect for personal liberties. In some centers there is still a flavor of the vermilion life that made 'Frisco famous once on a day; in others there is brisk trade; in others—Tomsk especially—there is high regard for intellectual attainments and popular education.

To all intents and purposes the commercial life of the country is spread along the lines of the railroads, the Trans-Siberian mainly. It is unfair to the country, however, to judge it solely from what one sees along that belt, especially if one sees it only from the windows of the Trans-Siberian express or learns of it from legends swapped by drummers in the café car.

Not long since, American students of Russia were regaled by a book written by a traveler who had seen Siberia mainly from the car window and had drawn from what she saw and heard some fearsome morals. There was the scandal about the school girls—how they were accustomed to haunt the cafés in nothing but their gymnasium suits. The reader visualized bloomed maidens in bare arms and barer legs and altogether scanty attire, a little touch that made Siberian café life a relief after the dingy humdrum of Broadway. For a matter of fact, most school girls in Russia wear their gymnasium suits most of the time. It is a modest black or brown frock that comes to the boot-tops in a seemly Victorian manner, has a high collar and long sleeves. The majority of the girls would be far more attractive if they didn't wear this gymnasium suit, but then the Government requires it and it suffers from the fact that it takes its name from the Teutonized title for the Russian middle school—the *gymnasium*. And so fades another Siberian legend!

But to return to the Trans-Siberian Railway belt. For a greater part of the way—from the Urals almost to Lake Baikal—it cuts through the black soil region. To the north and south lie the timber and mining sections and, in the western reaches, the cattle lands. When it reaches the region of Baikal and the Trans-

baikalian ridge the biggest mining fields are tapped. Following the newly completed Amur Railway, wheat, timber and mineral lands are again brought into touch with their markets.

Along the belts of these railroads are the big cities: Tcheliabinsk, a cattle town and an immigration distributing center; Omsk, the hub of the butter, eggs, meat, and hide trade; Tomsk, a mining and intellectual center where are located the University of Tomsk and the Technology Institute; Crasnoyarsk, another wheat and mining town; Irkutsk, the administrative and mining capital; Stretensk, at the headwaters of the Shilka and Amur, a mining outpost; Blagowestchensk, where mining, wheat, education, murder and fine shops all do a flourishing trade; and finally Vladivostok, "Queen of the East," the great port on the Pacific and Russia's fortress facing Japan, thirty-six hours away across the waters to the East.

Thus the western half of Siberia may be said to be devoted to wheat and cattle; the central part to mining, and the eastern half to mining and agriculture. These divisions, of course, are very rough, and the reader had better consult a map of the country and study out from the geographical and physical lay of the land the products naturally pertaining to each section.

Statistics may also help to picture the possibilities of this vast region.

The annual overturn from eggs alone totals \$45,000,000, which represents but 40% of the entire output, since the lack of cold storage plants reduces the value of sound eggs to that proportion; moreover, the

scale of prices is much lower in Siberia than in America.<sup>1</sup>

In 1911 the butter industry turned out 16,000,000 pounds, valued at \$5,000,000. This was the product of 550 butter-making *artels* with a membership of 120,000. Of course, there was a great deal of butter made in addition to these figures, which represent only the export trade for 1911.

Of the cattle exported in 1911 there were 65,000 head valued at \$1,250,000. Cereals valued at \$15,000,000 were exported in the same year. Hides were valued at \$3,000,000; wool was worth \$2,000,000. Incidentally, it is reckoned that there are 16 sheep and 14 pigs to every 100 of population in Siberia.

The copper output in 1911 reached 3,780 tons, and the coal, 1,986,346 tons. Later figures on gold are available; they show the product for 1913 to be 120,280 pounds (3,007 poods of Russian measurement, and a pood is equivalent roughly to 40 pounds).

### III

The needs of a country like Siberia are mainly connected with equipment. Nature is bountiful and the inhabitants have only to take advantage of her generosity. The country is as yet young, and the soil has scarcely been more than scratched.

There are wheatfields that eventually will outstrip anything in the world. It has been estimated that the black soil belt of Siberia, if properly cultivated, would

<sup>1</sup> In March, when the rivers were frozen tight as a drum and the land was covered with snow, I bought fresh laid eggs from Siberian farmers for 12 copecks (6 cents) a dozen. When they discovered I was an American, they raised the price—to 8 cents.

furnish food enough for five times the present population of European Russia. In order to handle the grain from this region, the Government has started to construct a series of 84 grain elevators along the lines of the railways.

Before Siberia can become a vital factor in the world's markets, she must develop along two logically connected lines—railroads and population. Capital will be required to construct and equip these railroads with up-to-date stock. The present butter, egg and meat trades, for example, use only 1300 cold storage cars and there are but five cold storage centers along the line of the Trans-Siberian—only a fraction of what is actually required. Until more cold storage facilities are provided Siberia can bring only a small part of her perishable foodstuffs to the markets of the Continent.

The Government is keenly alive to the railroad situation. As we have seen, it has undertaken the construction of several new lines, and has let permits for nine additional lines to syndicates. Work on these nine has been started and is progressing. They will be constructed in the period 1917-22 with 1927 as an outside date. These private-built lines are planned as follows:

*The South Siberian Railway:* This will run from Omsk, across the Kirghiz steppes through Akmolinsk and, crossing the Irtysh River at Pavlodar, will continue on through Slavgorod, the present terminus of the Kulundin Railway, to Barnaul, where it will connect with the Altai Railway system and the Kunzetsk-Barnaul branch of the Kulchugino Railway. This line will provide another trunk system across the plains

of Western Siberia, about 220 miles south of the present Trans-Siberian, and connect the railroads of European Russia with Minusinsk. It will be 1000 miles long and in it provide an outlet for the products of the Khirgiz steppes and the rich agricultural districts along the upper Irtysh and Obi Rivers and the mineral wealth of the foothills of the Amolinsk and Semipalatinsk districts, which are especially rich in copper, lead and zinc ores.

*Akomolinsk-Spassky Copper Mines Railway:* To connect the proposed South Siberian trunk line with the mineral areas to the south in the vicinity of the famous Spassky copper mines.

*Slavgorod-Semipalatinsk-Verny Railway:* This line, which will connect Western Siberia with Central Asia, is to run south from Slavgorod, the terminus of the Kulundin Railway, to Semipalatinsk and thence, skirting the foothills of the Altai, to Verny, the center of a very rich district south of Lake Balkhash. The total length will be 1000 miles. A branch line is proposed to pass through the Altai to Kuldja on the other side of the Mongolian border. This will make Verny a railroad and trade center for the great commerce of Mongolia, which, under the Russian suzerainty, is being rapidly developed. Already a railway is being constructed to Verny from a point on the Tashkent Railway in Russian Turkestan, thus connecting this territory with the railroads of Western Siberia, and making possible the exchange of Siberian grain and other products with the semi-tropical products of Russian Turkestan and Central Asia.

*Petropavlovsk-Kokchetav Railway:* Running south from the Trans-Siberian about a hundred miles to

Kokchetav, this line will serve the steppe region thereabouts, and will enable the syndicates to connect up with other lines in the region for the transportation of mineral products to the south and east.

*Ekaterinburg-Kurgan Railway:* This forms a north branch of the Trans-Siberian between the Petrograd-Tumen-Omsk line already constructed, and the main line of the Trans-Siberian. It is well under way.

*Achinsk-Yensysk Railway:* This is to be projected from the Trans-Siberian trunk line northward to the headwaters of the Lena River, connecting up the Lena gold fields.<sup>1</sup>

In addition there are railroads projected which will further open up the northern reaches of Siberia—the Tiumen-Tomsk line, skirting the southern fringe of the timber belt, and a line north from Obdorsk on the lower Obi to a port on the Arctic Ocean, connecting up with an ice-free summer port.

#### IV

As in the case of the railroads, capital is also required to equip the mines, to finance agricultural developments and to foster manufacturing in the cities. There is some British capital in Siberian mining at present, a little American and a great deal of German. The resources of the various mining regions have barely been scratched. This is especially true of the Transbaikalian Mountains and the littoral of Lake Baikal where there are oil, coal, gold, iron, copper and zinc in quantities to repay development. The Lena

<sup>1</sup> This data and that on pages 229, 230 appeared in the Report of the Canadian Trade Commissioner in Russia.



goldfields in the north can easily become another Klondike and so can the Altai Mountains in the south, while Baikal will eventually be another Baku.

Siberia has but few factories, and there is a crying need for the establishment of more. "In metal manufacturers and agricultural machinery, Siberia is but little inferior as a consumer to European Russia."<sup>1</sup> The raw materials are at hand, and all the cities need are Chambers of Commerce alive to their opportunities to attract foreign and native capital. At present the manufactured goods have to be transported half across Asia. There is no reason why there should not be established in a city like Irkutsk a factory to make agricultural implements. It would be a central distributing point for the Western steppes and the Amur Valley. In the same way a Moscow fabric works might readily find a market for the output of a branch factory in Tomsk. As matters stand, print goods, linens and other fabrics, which are practically necessities of life in any nation, have to be transported the several thousands of miles across the Trans-Siberian. In the eastern provinces Japan is fast capturing the print goods trade.

## v

Doubtless the development of Siberia will follow much the same lines as the growth of our West and of western Canada. The railroads already built and building, together with the vast waterways and the northern Arctic Sea route, will furnish contact with the markets and with civilization. It might speed matters were the Russian Government to follow the prac-

<sup>1</sup>The Russian Year Book for 1915, page 515.

tice instituted here with good results—that of granting the land contiguous to the railroad lines to those companies that construct the lines.

As we have already seen, settlers are not wanting. Russia in Europe can easily spare another 11,000,000, and with this addition Siberia would still be far from crowded.

The Government readily lends a hand to these new settlers in the Land of Promise. "A Russian peasant to-day can receive free transportation for himself and family, his flocks and his herds and everything that he hath, from his native village to a settlement in far-away Siberia. And there he will be given land and loaned a grant for a year's farming expenses.

"Each male is given forty and one-half acres, care being taken that the region to which he is sent compares favorably in general characteristics with the land he had known in Russia. No taxes are levied for the first three years, and only one-half of the taxes for the second three. Service in the army is not compulsory among immigrants until the end of the first three years, that is to say, until they have cleared their fields and built their houses. Moreover, the Government sees that there is to each family at least one man. Should the older son die while the younger is in the ranks, the younger son is dismissed from active service and sent back to the farm. If the peasant is absolutely destitute, the Government will help in furnishing farm utensils, payment being set for a later date and on the installment plan; will give him seed, and, should the first crop be poor, provide him with the cash equivalent. He is allowed as much timber as he needs for the construction of his house and barn. Moreover, in

order that the farmers may learn modern agricultural and dairy methods, the Government has set up dairy schools and agricultural instruction stations and offers series of prizes to be competed for."<sup>1</sup> Like any other settler in a new land, he must bear privations, loneliness and the capriciousness of the climate, problems which, of course, can only be solved by the individual himself.

Were the Jew an agriculturist, Russia might well solve her troublesome Semitic problems by abolishing the Pale in Europe and permitting the Jews to emigrate to Siberia. Unfortunately, the Jew is not a good farmer; even here in America, where every effort has been made to induce the Jews of the crowded cities to take up agricultural life, the results have been far from encouraging. The Jew is first and last a middleman. Were Russia to open Siberia to unrestricted occupation of Jews, the Siberian cities would soon face the tenement problem with the attendant filth, crime and crowding that are found in New York, London, Warsaw, Kiev, in fact, in any place where Jews congregate. There are a number of Jews in Siberia today, so many that the country has earned the sobriquet of "The Jews' Paradise," but they are usually of the better classes such as are permitted to dwell outside the Pale in European Russia.

Profiting by some of the mistakes made in our West, Siberia can eventually become a region of immense development and of immense material returns to those who settle there. The coöperative societies, if properly managed, will avoid the economic mistakes that

<sup>1</sup> *Through Siberia, an Empire in the Making.* Richardson Wright and Bassett Digby. Pages 102-3.

have blighted some sections of our West. Thus, in the state of Oklahoma, 67% of the farmers are tenants. Wall Street controls the finances of the locality, and the farmers are only just now awakening to the necessity for coöperation. In other words, Siberia can be an agricultural country owned and operated by the people who live there and till the soil, instead of the chattel land of a group of bankers. The situation among the agricultural populace seems to indicate the probability of this promising development; at least, there are as yet no wealthy land-owners in Siberia outside of the Tsar and the Royal Family (the immense grants of land that used to obtain have been stopped by law), and the multimillionaire ranch-owner is unknown, whereas the coöperative societies are very numerous and very active.

Beside being a region of great material returns, Siberia can be to Russia a Land of Promise in that it will afford a legitimate outlet for the energies of new generations. We in America are apt to judge the situation in Russia merely on the basis of politics, corrupt politics. Yet the real facts of the case are quite different. Of the 182,000,000 souls in the Russian Empire, fully 175,000,000 live in European Russia, which is by no means capable of sustaining life and affording means of a livelihood for so large a number. While the average density is only 20 to the square mile, the figure is high enough to cause active emigration, since the population of Russia increases at the rate of 3,000,000 per annum.

Congestion of this sort spells difficulty in gaining a livelihood. It breeds mobs. It develops discontent. Now, the great problem that faces Russia is not how

much voice in their own government shall the people of Russia be given, but how shall a population of over 175,000,000 be fed and 'given a means of earning a living. Set the same situation here in America, and democracy would play but a small part in the solution. To repeat the findings of a previous chapter, the greatest evil Russia has suffered has been that her people have not had enough to keep them busy, and that their Government, in its liquor monopoly, put temptation in the path of workers and idlers alike. In some regions the climate has also reduced the opportunity for work—long winters used to spell idleness. On the other hand, the abolition of the vodka traffic and the growth of industries have solved some of the difficulty. Russian industries are not confined to the cities, but are largely situated in the country, so that the country folk in the immediate vicinity will have sufficient to keep them busy all the time the factories are working.

On the other hand, the new agencies now tending toward the development of opportunities for the regeneration of the peasant will only make competition among the laborers in European Russia all the more keen and the Government must attract to other regions of the Empire the overflow of her working populace.

Siberia and Central Asia are the two most promising regions, and they are already booming with the alacrity of a Western town. They not only offer opportunities for work—they impel work: the pioneer must either conquer the elements or they conquer him and he goes out *fantee*. When these regions arrive at a plane of economic power which commands respect, they will dictate their terms to Petrograd, just as they

have once or twice already dictated them, just as the West and Southwest of the States to-day dictate to the White House.

Those who have the future of Russia at heart know that their Land of Promise lies in Siberia. And with all the fervid wisdom of a previous American generation, they are counseling their rising generations: "Go East, young man, go East!"

## CHAPTER XIII

### RUSSIA'S MANIFEST DESTINIES

**H**E would be a rash man, indeed, who would attempt to draw the map of Europe as it will be ten years hence. Diplomats and generals are capricious cartographers. Natural barriers no longer play the deciding rôle they once did in the establishment of frontiers. Modern warfare and its consequent treaty obligations disregard mountain ridge and swelling river. Yet the same forces that tear up one map, draw another. These are the forces of finance, of economic pressure and of national ideals.

Russia's points of contact with the world—the spots where her economic development, her finance, and the ideals of her people touch the schemes of other powers—are in the Balkans, in Poland, Turkey, Persia and Manchuria. In Poland she meets with the Teuton forces. In Turkey she touches the Teutonized Turkish forces. In Persia she is contiguous to British spheres of influence. In Manchuria she meets the spreading streams of Japanese. In the Balkans she touches the Germano-Austrian scheme of empire. During the course of the war each of these points has been brought into greater or less prominence, and each has played its part in shaping the eventual destinies of the great Slav Empire.

## I

Of the warring powers, one alone has pleaded either the financial or the economic excuse. Germany claimed "a place in the sun"—a place for her alleged bursting masses of population. In addition, lured on by the Junkers who masqueraded as moral leaders, the German people had come to believe that their divine calling was to carry German Kultur to whatsoever less enlightened land their economic conquests might give control.

In cold fact, as the world has since learned, these seemingly idealistic schemes meant nothing more than an eventual territorial expansion westward to gain further command of more North Sea littoral, even though that movement meant the subjugation and absorption of Holland and Belgium, and the Teutonizing of that strip of Europe and Asia extending from the North Sea to the head of the Persian Gulf—Berlin to Bagdad. This latter movement covered an area inhabited by 50,000,000 non-Germans, and necessitated the obliteration of the smaller Balkan states. It meant *Deutschland über alles—über* Bulgarian and Serbian and Austrian and Hungarian and Rumanian and Greek and Turk and Armenian. This was the crux of the European situation, and so sensitively adjusted was the state of affairs that the murder of the Austrian Grand Duke Ferdinand precipitated a world-wide conflict.

The details of what happened in the four years and in the forty-eight hours immediately preceding the declaration of war on Russia have been written of at greater length and in more detail than this chapter can



consider. Summarizing the situation from both sides, it is evident that Germany was fully prepared for war with Russia—as she was equally ready for war with France—but that she did not expect Russia to enter the conflict. Germany was confident that her influence at Petrograd would withstand any amount of pressure from the people's side or from the side of Russia's allies. Moreover, Russia's power in the Balkan States had been gradually waning—at least so Germany thought.

Years before, the Kaiser had proclaimed himself the friend of the Turkish people, and had ever since seen to it that the Turkish Army was officered with men from Berlin. Deliberately, openly, Germany was buying the favor of Russia's traditional enemy.

On the thrones of Rumania and Bulgaria the Kaiser had succeeded in placing German kings, and had married his sister to Constantine of Greece.

In all these developments the Kaiser's moves were obvious. The man-in-the-street knew about these affairs from his daily papers, and, if he had two grains of wit, he also knew why Russia was so intent on preserving the individuality and independence of the smaller Balkan States; that was her rôle in her alliances with France and England.

While Germany was openly laying her plan for the Berlin-to-Bagdad move, she was also secretly getting her hand into the foreign affairs of Russia. In fact, for six years, 1910-1916, a great many of Russia's diplomatic moves were directed from Berlin. It was in the period 1910-1916 that Sazanov was the Russian Foreign Minister, and although under him Russia's foreign developments were vast indeed, they were also prac-

tically developments in the favor of Germany. It may have been that Sazanov worked unwittingly, that he was not aware of the ultimate dreams of the Prussian Empire. Such things are wholly possible. Nevertheless, he played into the hands of the Germans, and Russia is paying the price. According to M. Sazanov, Austria was planning to overthrow the *status quo* in the Balkans and to establish her own hegemony there. To offset this, he fostered the Serbo-Bulgarian Agreement (signed February 29th, 1912), which he expected to be at once a checkmate to both Turkey and Austria. Then came the second Balkan War, which left the Balkans divided and an easy prey to Teuton dreams. When Russia supported the claim of Rumania to a strip of Bulgarian territory, Bulgaria naturally turned against Russia, leaving Rumania and Greece apparently on the fence, and Serbia alone amenable to Russia's dictates. When Serbia refused to back down to the Austrian ultimatum, the whole diplomatic house of cards in the Near East went crashing to the ground.

The war came to Russia at a moment of great industrial development, at a time when the Empire was beginning to show signs of political and commercial advancement. The Russian people did not expect the war, for the simple reason that they had not looked upon the Germans as their foes. So great had been German influence in Petrograd that newspapers printing criticisms of German methods in Russia were quickly censored out of existence.

In diplomatic circles there was the influence of Sazanov and of Baron Rosen. The latter will be re-

membered by Americans as the Russian Ambassador to Washington. By Russians he will be remembered as the very clever diplomat who turned Japanese military victory into diplomatic defeat over the long green table at Portsmouth in 1904. At that time and ever afterward he has shown himself to be a friend of German interests in the Near East. In a paper dated May 13, 1913, Baron Rosen counseled Russia to make a total concession to Germany's scheme of development in Europe. He suggested that Russia drop her dream of a Slavonic Empire and call a halt on proselyting in the Balkans and against Austria-Hungary in the Slav provinces of that nation. Further, he advised Russia to give up the plan of ever gaining control of Constantinople and to consent to the Dardanelles' being neutralized. He even went so far as to say that Russia should withdraw from both her alliances with France and Great Britain, recognize the right of Germany to expand to the Persian Gulf and over Holland and Belgium if need were, and for Russia to turn her attention solely to her interests in the Far East. Sazanov followed the lines that has been summarized in this paper; under him in 1912 Russia succeeded in establishing her suzerainty over Mongolia by the terms of the Russo-Mongolian Agreement and Protocol signed October 21, 1912, and in 1915 occurred an exchange of territory in Manchuria that was further indicative of the fact that the path of Russian development lay, according to Germany's dreams, in the Far East. This scheme of development also links up logically with the growth of the Russian Empire eastward—a convenience for Germany, to say the least.

## II

In the early days of 1915 there occurred a little diplomatic shift in Manchuria that, at any other time, would have turned the courts of Europe inside out. As matters stand, the world in general and the United States in particular are just beginning to appreciate what the movement presaged.

In payment for munition assistance Russia first ceded Japan the northern half of the Island of Saghalin, the lower half having been given over to her by the Treaty of Portsmouth. By this Japan acquired valuable coal and iron mines. A short time later Japan was ceded the control of Manchuria up to Harbin. Let us see what that meant.

Heretofore the Russian trains ran south from Harbin to Chang-Chun on a branch of the Chinese Eastern Railway, the name under which Russia operates across Central Manchuria and links up the western and central stretches of the Trans-Siberian trunk line with the shorter line crossing the Maritime Provinces to Vladivostok. Down this Harbin-Chang-Chun line were scattered the little turreted forts, each with its quota of Cossacks, its threatening machine guns and its wireless connections with Petrograd. Travelers on that line when reaching Chang-Chun merely walked across the station platform and entered Japanese territory by boarding the trains of the South Manchurian Railway, the corporation under which Japan operates in the Liaotung Peninsula. Today the Japanese trains run into Harbin, and Russia does not start until the bulbous railway concession at that city is reached.

It is easy enough to dismiss this as payment of a

debt accrued by the war. But, for a matter of fact, Russia's concession to Japan in Manchuria represents a vital international change which will radically affect the situation in the Far East and, in turn, involve the prestige and power of other nations there.

Twelve years ago Russia was smarting from her defeat at Port Arthur and Mukden. But she was by no means finally defeated. Roosevelt's offer of mediation came at a time when Russia was about to turn the tables on Japan, an interference which the Russian people have not forgotten and which accounts for the Douma's quick and conclusive reply to the peace overtures of President Wilson. In the years that followed the Treaty of Portsmouth, Russia and Japan kept very close watch on each other in Manchuria. Every uprising, every epidemic, every attack by native brigands was taken as an excuse for throwing along the line of the Chinese Eastern Railway a fresh regiment of troops. In the spring of 1910-11 Russia had half a million men of all branches of the service east of Lake Baikal, and along the lines of the Chinese Eastern Railway and the Amur Railway she was building substantial barracks to accommodate enormous bodies of troops. For her part Japan was doing the same. She was calculated to have, at the beginning of the war, several regiments more than were permitted her according to her agreement with Russia.

In these years the commercial jealousies of Russia and Japan were anything but covert. A traveler through that neighborhood who kept his eyes open would have judged, and rightly, that the region was due for another war in about five years. In the north, Russia was fast completing the Amur Railway, which

extended over the shoulder of North Manchuria, and had surveyed a line to run south from Blagowestchensk on the Amur River to Tsitsitar on the Chinese Eastern Railway. Meantime, Russia has also sufficiently consolidated her control over Mongolian trade to justify the establishment of a suzerainty. The situation resolved itself into Russia and Japan's checkmating each other in the northern part of the Far East.

Instead of conflict in that region came the European War—Russia's Balkan point of contact with the European powers broke into flame. Japan went into Kiaochow, took the German Pacific Islands and wiped Germany off the map in the Far East. With this accomplished, she became little more than a neutral. She was assigned the duty of policing the Far East, and of answering what she was told to answer when the neutral powers sent out their peace overtures. Her people have since waxed fat on munition orders, and her Government has acquired in Central Manchuria further lands in which can be settled some of the teeming millions of Hondo, Shikoku and Kyushu.

### III

Let us now look at another point of contact; the Trans-Caucasus, where Russia touches Turkey and Persia and the outer fringe of the British Empire.

In the winter of 1915-16, when the Grand Duke Nicholas had been beaten back before the onrush of Mackensen and Hindenburg past Warsaw, the world was suddenly puzzled by an order relieving him of command on the Russian western front and shipping him to the Caucasus as Governor General. At the time

it was interpreted as a mark of the Tsar's personal disfavor, and from that day on the Tsar was at the front. There were credible rumors, circulated by the press, to the effect that the Grand Duke was planning to usurp the throne and that the pro-German forces in Petrograd had caused his dismissal because he had pursued his attacks with too great vigor.

At the same time Britain was pushing her Mesopotamian campaign, reaching northward from the Persian Gulf for the relief of Kut-el-Amara, which unhappily came too late. She was also throwing away the lives of countless men on Gallipoli. Her scheme of attacking Turkey, from both sides was a logical enough procedure.

On the other hand, it must be remembered that for a century England has stood in the way of Russia's attaining Constantinople and the Dardanelles for fear that this possession would mean the eventual encroachment upon India and Persia. The campaign up from the Persian Gulf may be interpreted as part of England's maneuvers against Turkey; it may also be interpreted as a movement to safeguard that region from Russian approach.

At another point on these pages<sup>1</sup> I have said that the Slavophil dream of extending the Russian Empire until it shall be contiguous to the land of another Christian power in Asia is by no means dead. Russia is spending vast sums to open up her South Siberian and Central Asiatic provinces with railroads. The Trans-Caspian region promises to be one of the richest wheat fields in the world. One of the first things the Grand Duke asked for after reaching his new post was half

<sup>1</sup> See page 97.

a million roubles to be devoted to planting the rich land acquired from the Turks. Frankly, Russia intends to put the Caucasus and the Trans-Caspian regions, together with Siberia, on the commercial map. When the Grand Duke was relieved of his command he had by no means proved himself a failure. He had brought his army intact through a long retreat—an accomplishment that all great tacticians from Cæsar down regarded as being even more difficult than winning an open victory in the field. Granted that he had been driven back and that Poland was in the hands of the Prussians, Russia still possessed intact the bulk of her forces, forces that Brusiloff later used for his advance in the summer of 1916. The transfer of the Grand Duke to the Caucasus cannot be interpreted as a military rebuke; for it meant that he was given command of a vital point on Russia's frontier. To him it was entrusted to harry the Turks from the rear, to coöperate with the British, and at the same time to guide the British movements in a manner that would be most advantageous to Russia.

Of late it would seem that Great Britain has become perfectly amenable to the idea of Russia's possessing Constantinople—in fact, Trepov, the Prime Minister during the last few months of 1916, frankly stated that the Dardanelles and Constantinople were Russia's share of the spoils.

Since the war opened, England and the English have arrived at an appreciation of Russia and the Russians. The almost sacrosanct manner in which Russians are regarded in England to-day must amuse those who have followed the course of the two powers during the past twenty-five years. Russia is England's pres-



ent fad, just as twenty years ago Germany was her fad. Doubtless this amity between the two peoples will last for many years, but the suddenness of its appearance should not be permitted to cloud the facts in the case. And the facts are these: England is friendly to Russia only when it is convenient to be so. When Russia steps on England's toes or England steps on Russia's, there will be the same showing of teeth and the same rattling of sabers that there has been in the past. Russia is looking out for her own interests, just as Britain is looking out for hers. She is keeping an eye on England in Central Asia, she is also laying her own plans in the Far East.

## IV

It is only right that England should be proud of the manner in which she has served humanity and maintained the balance of power in the Far East. She has done more than any other nation to develop that region; she has put China on her feet—so far as China would permit her. She has maintained peace there and made possible the trafficking of other nations. In this endeavor she had the coöperation of France in the south, the advantage of the presence of the United States in the Philippines, and in the north the vigorous support of Japan. But her claims over the Far East have not gone undisputed. The establishment of Kiaochow was Germany's answer to it, and Russia's suzerainty over Mongolia and her recent concessions to Japan have been others. In short, Russia is making a bid for the control of that part of the Far East to which she is directly related—North Manchuria, Mongolia and the

western regions of China that can be connected with her Central Asiatic provinces by rail across the continent. Japan has taken the southern parts of Manchuria and also Kiao-Chou, and is repelling every effort on the part of American financiers to develop the railroads and other means of internal communications of China. Russia and Japan control the northern Far East. Let no one mistake this.

In addition to her just claim to commercial expansion in the Far East, the Russian development is laid on the ground of temperament. Being partly of Asiatic origin, she understands the Asiatic, knows how to handle him, can look at matters from his viewpoint. Moreover, as the Orthodox Church does not proselytize, she can avoid those clashes of moral and religious propaganda that constantly disturb the serene course of Asiatic life and society.

As I have tried to show, the idea of Russia and England's being eternally friendly is quite impossible. While England unquestionably holds Russia in the palm of her financial hand, it is very much to be doubted if Russia will permit herself to be crushed in that commercial hand after the war, as she permitted herself to be held by Germany after the Russo-Japanese conflict. In her agreement with Japan, Russia holds a trump card against Britain, and she will hold it to play at the right moment.

The Russo-Japanese Entente is a situation that the United States might well watch closely. It has many possible outcomes, some of them most disastrous to us and to the world's peace.

Looking ahead ten, twenty, thirty years, we can see several arrangements of the world's powers: (1) Ger-

many, Russia and Japan, controlling a great sweep of territory from the North Sea to the Yellow, and opposing France, England, Italy and the United States. (2) England, France, Russia and Italy and the United States opposing Germany and German expansion. (3) Germany, England, France, Italy and the United States as against Russia and Japan—the East and the West of the world. I would not prophesy that any one of these will come to pass. I merely suggest them as possible combinations, and the reader who likes to dream in terms of empires can do so on this basis to his heart's content.

It were futile for the United States to talk of forming a League to Enforce Peace without having also to consider what part she will play in it. And if she plays a part she will have to give up the worn-out counsels against "entangling alliances," counsels uttered generations before the Trans-Atlantic giants were conceived and before the *Deutschland* made her unbelievable undersea journey from Bremen to Baltimore. Just as no man liveth to himself, so no nation liveth to itself. The time has come when the United States must decide what part she is going to play in the world's work beside making money from it. In the chaos of international relations that now exists, we are sure of only one thing—the Russo-Japanese Entente is daily gaining power in the northern part of the Far East. Pacifists and the Middle West to the contrary, it is a situation well worth watching. We must make our bid for Russian friendship, we must maintain cordial relations with England and France which hold Russia in fee, for, if a conflict between the East and

West does come to pass, we will not be permitted to wash our hands of the whole matter.

## v

Russia's other point of contact with alien powers is Poland.

Poland has ever been the scapegoat of the nations. She has been battled with and battled over, and whether victorious or defeated she eventually has had to pay a terrible price for very existence itself. The German paper Kingdom of Poland and its bombastic establishment in the fall of 1916 was too crudely carried out to deceive even the most stupid. Germany needed troops and workers, and, in exchange for as many fighting and working units as the German Governor General could assemble, Poland was given some famous scraps of paper. When that land is drained dry, and if the German power still exists, Germany will doubtless take the unfortunate country for her own—at least as much of it as she has wrested from Russia.

The German charges of Russian atrocities in Poland and the Russian countercharges amount to nothing more than the pot calling the kettle black, with more proof on the Russian side since she can call in Belgium to witness the terrible methods of the German military machine. The same can be said of the treatment each of these nations gave Poland previous to the war. In her Polish provinces Germany ruled with just as strict a hand as Russia ruled in hers. There was the same attempt to subjugate the people and to assimilate them. But Germany had carried her methods even farther—she had commercially invaded

and taken possession of Russian Poland five years before the European War blazed up. The rapid industrial growth of Poland during those five years was due mainly to German capital and to the concessions made to German migration by Count Witté. Russia policed Poland, Germany administered its commerce. That was about how the situation stood. The German pleas for making Poland a buffer state were the very fabric and tissue of hypocrisy. Germany begged for one thing and was striving to accomplish the opposite. Poland was her gateway to Russia, and she made every possible use of that entrance.

What will become of Poland is another of those prophecies that only a rash man or a fool would make categorically. The chaos of three years of war cannot be cleared away overnight; another generation must pass before we can know what Poland's destiny will be. There is still a great and noble spirit left in the Polish people—that would seem to be the one thing that the war has not obliterated in Poland! Hope springs eternal in the Polish heart. Noble traditions live on, and the Pole—German, Russian and Austrian alike—dreams of the day when Poland will emerge again, a knight in shining armor.

Poland is one of history's answers to the question: "Can a nation ever be totally destroyed?" It may be divided, it may be subjugated, its fair lands may be laid waste and its women and children carried into captivity, but the ideals of a people are indestructible and war only makes their tissue firmer. Nations crumble and pass away because their people suffer financial degeneration of the soul. This Poland has

never experienced. Suffering has bred in her the will to live. She has never been too proud to fight.

It would be conducive to the peace of Europe were Poland "united, independent and autonomous." In this respect Petrograd concurs perfectly with President Wilson's views. Russia promised this to her provinces at the beginning of the war, and Germany gave it under economic pressure on her scraps of paper. But by a united Poland Russia means a Poland consisting of not only her provinces but the provinces now controlled by both Germany and Austria. Yet it is to be questioned whether Austria and Germany will resign their fertile lands and rich manufacturing districts to any such Utopian plan. Surely it would work to the advantage of all three nations concerned and to the peace of Europe, but that day is still far off.

## VI

Russia's final point of contact is Turkey, and of all her possible avenues for reaching the ultimate Russian ideal, this one seems least obstructed.

But why does Russia want Constantinople? Why does she want the Dardanelles?

Land is the last thing she wants. She has enough and plenty. Nor is her empire scattered over the seven seas, as is Britain's; it is a continuous stretch from the Baltic to the Pacific, from the Arctic to the Caspian, one-sixth of the earth's land surface.

Russia has suffered the loss of ten Polish provinces, inhabited by 12,000,000 people, the richest regions of the Empire, the Moscow and Vladimir Governments excepted. In compensation for this loss she looks to

Constantinople—Constantinople, which will relieve her of the necessity of maintaining costly defenses along the Black Sea; Constantinople, which will give her a port open the year round; Constantinople, the dream of her people for centuries. Speaking of Russia's aims in an address to the Russian armies issued December 25th, 1916, the Tsar said: "Russia's attainment of the tasks created by the war—regarding Constantinople and the Dardanelles, as well as the creation of a free Poland from all three of her now incomplete tribal districts—has not yet been guaranteed." Trepov, speaking for the Russian people on his assumption of the portfolio of Prime Minister, said, "For more than a thousand years Russia has been reaching southward toward a free outlet on the open sea. This age-long dream, cherished in the hearts of the Russian people, is now ready for realization. . . .

"From the beginning of the war, wishing to spare human lives and suffering, we and our allies did our utmost to restrain Turkey from mad participation in hostilities. Turkey received formal assurances guaranteeing her, in exchange for neutrality, the integrity of her territory and independence, and also conferring on her certain privileges and advantages. These efforts were in vain. Turkey surreptitiously attacked us, and thus sealed her own doom.

"We then concluded an agreement with our allies, which established in a most definite manner the right of Russia to the straits and Constantinople. Russians should know for what they are shedding blood, and, in accord with our allies, announcement is made to-day of this agreement from this tribunal.

"Absolute agreement on this point is firmly estab-

lished among the Allies, and there is no doubt that after she has obtained sovereign possession of a free passage into the Mediterranean, Russia will grant freedom of navigation for the Rumanian flag which now, not for the first time, floats in battle side by side with the flag of Russia."

In this direction alone lies the hope of advancement for Russia. She has become leagued with Japan in the Far East, but Japan controls the whiphand and the ports. She has been driven back from all but a small strip on the Baltic, with Germany always in control of traffic and the seas there even before the war. Moreover, the Russian people want Constantinople because it is the birthplace of their faith and ideals—they want it with just the same intense longing that Roman Catholics would want Rome were Rome in Moslem hands, and as Americans would battle for Independence Hall were it the office of a German Governor General.

Summing up, then, the manifest destinies of Russia as they appear: (1) Russia must maintain cordial relations with Japan in order that a balance of power be preserved in the Far East and in order that her trade—and fully one-third of her trade goes through Japanese ports—be unrestricted. (2) That Russia attains Constantinople in order that she may have an ice-free port the year round and in order that the prayers and hopes of her people for centuries may be answered. (3) That she do her share in establishing "a united, independent and autonomous Poland." (4) That she stands by ready to preserve, as she has done before, the integrity and independence of the smaller Balkan States.



## VII

A great many Americans are more concerned with the internal destinies of Russia than they are with the part she is eventually to play in the concert of the world's powers. To put this interest in the form of the questions that are generally asked, we have the following:

"What chance have the Russian people to gain a greater voice in their own self-government?"

"What chance is there for a better treatment of the Jews?"

I believe that there will be no bloody revolution in Russia so long as the German influence can be kept in check. A "bloodless revolution" is in sight, and that the world has witnessed from the beginning of the war. The fight between the Douma and the bureaucracy has not been a fight between the bureaucrats *per se* and the people, but a contest between the pro-Germans and the Russian people for the control of their government in the management of this war. So long as Germany can command the unrest of the Russian people, it holds Russia helpless. The continuation of bureaucratic rule in Russia works to the advantage of Germany and the worst defeat Germany has suffered was the attainment of the Russian people to the control of their own internal affairs in March, 1917.

On the other hand there exists in Russia a condition that causes doubt; are the Russian people as yet in a position to govern themselves? It is easy enough for socialistic writers to spill gallons of vituperous ink over the situation in Russia; the fact remains that until the masses are better educated, until there

arises a greater industrial class, until education becomes more universal and more available, it is useless to speak of The Republic of Russia, free and practicable. The present reign has accomplished more toward the attainment of freedom along these lines than any previous régime, and the improvement has been due to the efforts of the people in their *Zemstvos* and Municipality Unions, and through the solidarity of the people against the corrupt pro-German bureaucracy.

The Jewish situation unquestionably constitutes one of those evils that Russia will soon crush. Revolution will bring this reform—although the powers in Russia are not forgetting that in the last Revolution, 40% of the revolutionists were Jews and in some districts it ran up to 90%.<sup>1</sup> The reform will come quickly when it does come, just as the freeing of the serfs was accomplished quickly and the freeing of the people from the bondage of drink was done over night.

We have our parallels here. In the lynching and race riots we have American practices that are quite comparable to the Russian *pogrom*, just as our "pork" is the American equivalent for the Russian bureaucrat's "graft." And just as the high-minded Americans blush for the inhuman discrimination against the negro and the vicious attacks on his race, so do high-minded Russians blush for the Pale and the *pogrom*. So long as we permit these evils to exist, we have no ground for criticizing Russia. Were the negro race a race of bankers and did they hold the purse-strings of the world, America would doubtless be in the same unfortunate light that Russia stands

<sup>1</sup> Vide *An Economic History of Russia* by James Mavor, Vol. II, Page 210. Professor Mavor is quoting von Plehvé, the Minister of the Interior, and agrees with his figures.

to-day. Because Russia insists on managing her Jewish population as she wishes, America cannot sign a commercial treaty with her to-day, and so long as she maintains that attitude she will not.

In considering both these matters—the political freedom of the people and the Jewish situation—it is well to remember that the situation in Russia is not the situation that exists in the United States, and that it is wholly unfair to Russia to judge her solely on the basis of American history or American customs.

In the abolition of the vodka traffic Russia has taken the greatest stride forward since the abolition of serfdom. Even the establishment of the Douma in nowise compares with it. To-day the Russian in the street has a clear head and a bit of money in his purse. He is sober now, and thinks; he has the wherewithal to purchase and has become a potential consumer. And in becoming a potential consumer he has also attained the plane of a potential citizen.

We in America who are inclined to look for drastic reforms must remember that the recent revolt of the leaders of the people is more against the German element in high places than against the concept of rule from above. Russia will need some figurehead to which the vast populace can look up. It is not prepared for the republican form of government as yet. It is just growing up to that state. The people have cleansed the old house. We must not require of them that they immediately build a new one.

## CHAPTER XIV

### RUSSIA AND AMERICA

**A**MERICA and Russia stand at opposite poles. Officially, no two nations under the sun could be farther apart. Between the Governments exist no apparent bond of sympathy, no common interests, no tangible ground of understanding—not even a commercial treaty. In spite of this disparity there can be found between the Russian people and the people of the United States a parallel that makes us almost kin. For in the mind of almost every Russian is an inherent sense of democracy, and a desire for democracy.

Among the Russian people—the folk who labor and fight and loaf and love—is to be found cordiality and tolerance one would scarcely expect in a nation where class lines are so closely drawn. There is also a freedom of the individual as an individual which is quite contrary to the conceptions one has of life in Russia.

The tolerance may be brusque, but the cordiality will invariably be poetic. The captain orders his men to face certain death with him and calls them “Little Doves”—*golubchiks*—as he does it. The *isvostik* will thrash his poor old horse and call him “Little Dove” while the blows are falling fastest!

The social snob is an unknown quantity in Russia. This, for the simple reason that the classes are

so far apart. One does not snub one's servants, and one would not think of trying to snub a *moujik*. It would be like snubbing a horse or a lovable dog. In all walks of life this democracy is evident; you find it in the army, in the church, in the schools, in the market stalls, everywhere. The Russian understands the classes beneath him.

Even taking into account the fact that human nature is the same in all ages and all peoples—verily it is the touchstone of the world!—the Russian expression of human nature is more akin to the American than it is to the British. This works out in devious ways—the rise of self-made men to positions of influence and honor, an instinctive appreciation of the arts, an impressionable religious sense, and a patriotism wholly voluntary and spontaneous. Russia “of the people and by the people” is very much “for the people.”

It were futile to say that we will understand the Russian better now that his Government is more liberal. China has had a republic for well-nigh a decade, and we neither know nor care more about the Chinese now than we did, save as they appeal to us as possible consumers of our wares. Perhaps it is the fact that our Governments have been so very different which gives us a basis for understanding the Russ.

Our official paths have crossed but little: the marks of sympathy in the Civil War, the sale of Alaska, and the abrogation of our commercial treaty. America has proved a safe harbor for fleeing administrative exiles, much as have England and France. No, it is not on the basis of Governmental and diplomatic relations that we can come to understand the Russian. Yet we are understanding him more and more each day.

It is remarkable that our misconceptions about Russia should be dispelled, not by denials issued by the Russian Government, but by the very affirmative power of the Russian people as expressed in the various phases of their arts. Russian music, the Russian dance, the Russian novel—these have entered in where diplomats feared to tread, entered in and found a home. The things that have sprung from the soul of Russia have awakened a sympathy in the soul of America. Our harmonies with Russia are harmonies of color, of line, of tone and of rhythm.

Other international relationships invariably find foundation in things different from these. The blood of the English flows in the veins of many of us. We speak her tongue and are beholden to her for many of our laws and customs. She has been a mother—not always kindly, not always faithful, but a mother just the same. France holds us in her eternal debt for the concept of political freedom, for the graciousness we would possess, for the brilliant spirit we would make our own and for the men who have willingly lived their lives in the cause of America. To both of these nations we have been bound by commerce for many years. The foundation and superstructure of those friendships are in barter and trade.

The relations between the Russian people and the American show quite a different basis. From a cloud of prejudice we are gradually emerging into the clearer light of an understanding. And we are being drawn there not by commerce, but by an appreciation of those good things the Russian people have to offer. Here are hands stretched across the seas bringing things more tangible than gold, more lasting than business. Here

we can see the soul of Russia awakening the soul of America to those matters that are more important than money—those things for which no nation than America stands in greater need—the things of the spirit.

In the last analysis the question is not, "What have Russia and America in common?" but "What have the Russian people to give the American, and what the American to give the Russian?"

For some years America has been lingering at the crossroads. We would seem to be undecided as to which path to take. We have noble traditions to live up to and evil traditions to live down. Slowly the whole order is changing. We are awakening to some very solemn facts. We are learning that a nation can gain the whole world and lose its soul, that without faith no culture can exist, that no people can advance without some *idée fixe*.

With one exception, the wars America has fought have been wars of liberation. But—and mark this point—no sooner has she concluded such a war than the ideals of liberation have been completely laid aside and she has plunged herself into business again. Liberation is not the *idée fixe* of the American people; business is. And in business America leads the world. She lost her chance at the title of liberator when she failed to speak out for Belgium and for those who went down with the *Lusitania*—her own flesh and blood. But in business she can point a new way, and perhaps by this she may gain salvation.

Business, as we now understand it in America, means service. The corporation that builds a railroad builds it for service, the man who publishes a magazine publishes it for service, the woman who enters business life

enters to serve others. Let this corporation, this publisher, this woman try to labor without that ideal of service, and they are doomed to failure. In other words, business in America has come to be conducted "by the people and for the people."

This is one of the greatest ideals we can carry to Russia to-day. Let our business men, who are seeking out markets there, remember this. Russia knows as well as America the lessons of political freedom on which this Government is based. Montesquieu and Marx were read by the people of Russia more than they were read by Americans. But our concept of commerce based on service is an ideal still to be raised in the Slav Empire.

In return, America can learn from Russia the value of coöperation. Freedom can be had for the asking in America; in Russia it was not to be had without fighting, and those who fought side by side have learned to labor side and side for their mutual interests and advantages. To dream of the *artel* in America would be wildly fantastic, but we are gradually acquiring a more active spirit of coöperation that may result in some of the good the *artel* in Russia has accomplished.

Let America teach Russia the human side of its dollar dynamics and, to pay the debt, Russia can teach America the value of class coöperation.

In the liveliness of their religious sense I believe that Russia and America are about equals. At all events one finds in no nation such a spirit of true religion, working seven days a week, as he finds here in America and yonder in Russia. Our faiths are separated by a great gulf, but they converge in an infinity of ideals.

The Russian is a crusader. He has always been



a crusader. To him Jerusalem is very real. It is an actual city that he goes up to. It is a place where he falls down upon his knees and on whose worn pavestones he imprints the kiss of fealty. For that reason Russian pilgrims in thousands journey each year to the Holy Lands. . . . In America, Jerusalem is an idea, a concept, a symbol. It requires a vast amount of mental journeyings to arrive there and perhaps a straining of the mental eye to behold it. But when we attain to the height whence it can be seen, we hold it in high regard. For this reason the American who actually goes up to Jerusalem is a rarity. In the past our Jerusalems have been hills of human wrong. Some day, when we shall have recovered our old ideals, Americans may journey thither again with swords unsheathed and armor glistering.

Crusading presupposes courage.

"It would be interesting to know what it is men are most afraid of," remarks Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment*. "Taking a new step, uttering a new word is what they are most afraid of." Yes, that and the dread most of us have of merging our insignificant selves into a common cause.

Our unlimited democracy has formed us into a nation of individual units; Russia's unlimited autocracy has moulded her people into masses.

The man in the street in Russia has had kept before him, either by his class or his Government, certain ideals not to be forgotten. They are the ideal of nationalism—the divine calling of his Russia; the ideal of his faith—the "Faith that will overcome the world"; the ideal of his individual sacrifice for the good of the race.

In the last analysis, the facts of Russia are mainly spiritual facts and the facts of America are mainly material facts. That is why America is so easy to define and Russia so difficult. Tiutchev spoke a solemn truth when he wrote:

You cannot understand Russia by the intelligence;  
You cannot measure her by the ordinary footrule;  
She has her own peculiar conformation;  
You can only believe in Russia.



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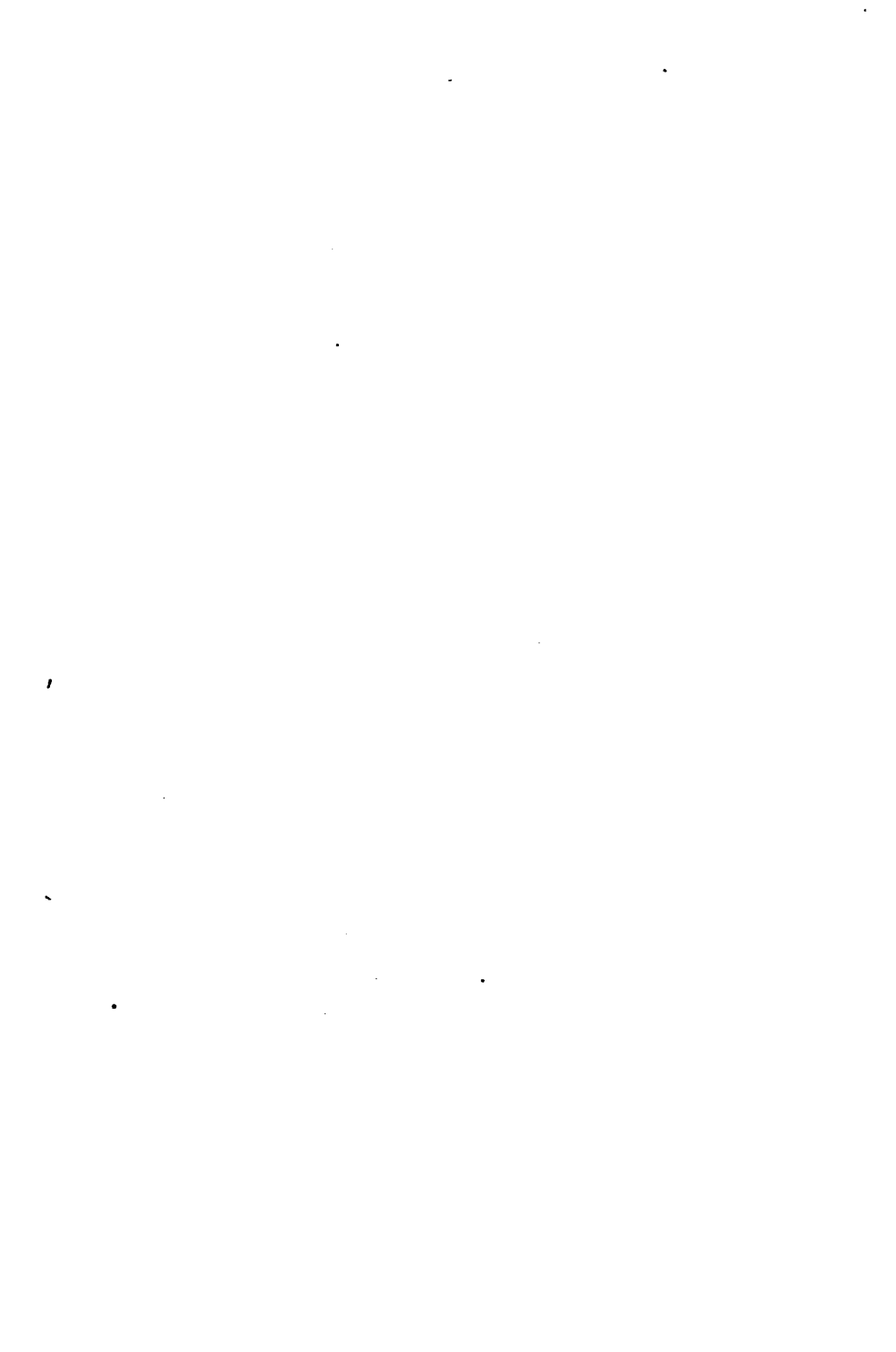
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